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ABSTRACT

Policy and program options for economic revitalization in the Southeast region of the United States through educational reform, with a focus on improving the learning experiences of middle-range high school students (30th to 70th percentile on standardized tests), are discussed. The study examined the ways in which state and local school districts are meeting students' needs: improving access to postsecondary education, especially minorities and first generation college students; increasing the probability of high school graduation; providing support and incentives; improving academic readiness; and including outside partners in the education process. Methodology involved a review of policy and research literature, analysis of political legislation and program documents, and telephone interviews with over 100 educational community members. A discussion of policy findings identifies three critical state policy roles for meeting middle-range student needs: school improvement, providing incentives, and promoting collaboration. A description of the following program initiatives are assessed according to their amenability to state policy and local implementation: alternative school programs; school-based and externally based support services; collaboratives; and indirect services such as staff and curriculum development. Conclusions are made in three areas: redefinition of the target group, change in the state role toward an outcomes-based model, and the broadening participation of external organizations. Appendices include forms and instruments, summaries of additional program initiatives, and state summaries. (18 references) (LMI)

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Fall 1990

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EDUCATIONAL REFORM OPTIONS TARGETED TO MIDDLE-RANGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sheila Rosenblum, Nancy Brigham, and Mary Ann Millsap

Economic revitalization through educational reform has been a persistent theme of the 1980s. As a consequence of this interest, issues that relate to creating a viable work force are receiving greater attention in educational reform. This report is the result of a "Study to Define Educational Reform Options Targeted to Middle-Range High School Students" to increase their high school graduation rates, enrollment and success in postsecondary institutions, and ability to contribute to the economic development of the region. Policy and program options that have been used to address these goals were examined. The report is intended to assist educational policymakers in the Southeast region and elsewhere who wish to explore such options.

In order to address these policy concerns, this study focused on policies and programs affecting the middle range of high school students. These students rank in the 30th to 70th percentiles on standardized tests and are neither relatively assured of success in college nor clients of remedial or developmental programs.

While the nation's very best students are well educated, those considered "average" often receive an unchallenging, watered-down curriculum that does not prepare them to go on to postsecondary education or into the work force. Yet this "unspecial" group of students represents the workers whose productivity will determine our national success in meeting the world economic competition of the next century.

This report is the product of a policy study for the Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory to define educational reform options targeted to middle-range high school students. The major task of the study was to examine how state and local school districts are meeting the needs of these students in the following ways:

- Improving access to postsecondary education, especially for minorities and first-generation college students.
- Increasing the probability of high school graduation.
- Providing support and incentives to students.
- Increasing academic readiness.
- Involving outside partners in the education process.

Information for the study came from three sources: policy and research literature, policy and program documents and legislation, and direct telephone

interviews with over 100 individuals involved in education who provided information on policy and program initiatives. To guide policymakers in choosing among options, the strengths and weaknesses of policy approaches and the amenability of programs to implementation from a state and local perspective were assessed. An overview of the findings of this assessment is presented in the following sections.

POLICY FINDINGS

The State Role and Policy Initiatives

State policies that support initiatives for middle-range students show evidence of new and evolving roles. States seem to be moving away from mandates and regulations and relying more on local solutions designed to meet state standards. They are also reaching beyond the traditional sphere of education to include new partners and forge new linkages. In this study, three critical state policy roles that reach middle-range students were identified.

1) The state plays a role in school improvement that involves three strategies. The most traditional strategy is one that consists of **mandates and regulations.** This approach results in widespread local implementation, but, since it frequently fails to meet locally perceived needs, the implementation may be more form than substance.

Within its school improvement role, the state also may use a strategy that provides **incentives for focused initiatives** such as curriculum and instructional innovations. This strategy allows local flexibility and is likely to target locally perceived needs but does not assure local implementation to the extent that regulations do.

A newer strategy is the **outcomes-based model**, often associated with restructuring efforts. Its strengths are the local flexibility it allows and the breadth of scope it entails. However, such models require local ingenuity and creativity and are, therefore, only moderately assured of stimulating local response.

2) A second role played by the state is one of providing incentives or disincentives for individual student performance. A strength of this approach is that it directly targets average students and is often a low-cost option. Its weaknesses are its limited scope and possible inequities in application.

3) The third role the state may play is in promoting collaborations across agencies responsible for secondary and postsecondary education. The strength of these linkages is that they can address the needs of middle-range students directly. However, because authority over the institutions rarely resides in any one state agency, the state's ability to use this strategy to influence response at the local level is limited.

Program Initiatives

A major component of the study was to gather information on program initiatives that serve middle-range students effectively and to assess the potential of these programs for implementation and dissemination from two perspectives:

- o The extent to which implementation can be influenced by state policy (amenability to state policy).
- o The ease of local implementation in terms of the availability of necessary resources and expertise (amenability to local implementation).

The following types of programs serving middle-range students were found and assessed according to these two perspectives:

1) Alternative school programs. These programs are comprehensive, focus on the core substance of education, and are attractive to teachers. Although highly amenable to establishment by state policy, they tend to be expensive and difficult to implement with local resources.

2) School-based support services/enrichment programs. These programs reach a large number of students and directly target students' needs. However, they are of limited intensity, are difficult to measure, and consume internal resources. They are moderately amenable to state policy and highly amenable to local implementation.

3) Externally based support services and enrichment. These programs infuse resources into the system and expand student horizons. However, they are less amenable to state policy than school-based services and are more difficult to implement.

4) Collaboratives with businesses and universities. These programs infuse resources into the school district and have the support of the education establishment. However, collaboratives are not very amenable to state policy and are difficult to implement at the local level.

5) Initiatives that serve students indirectly. Curriculum development and staff development initiatives are the major programs found in this category. These benefit all students and are attractive to teachers. However, they consume internal resources, and whatever success they achieve is difficult to measure. These initiatives are highly amenable both to state policy and to local implementation.

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EDUCATIONAL REFORM OPTIONS TARGETED TO MIDDLE-RANGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sheila Rosenblum, Nancy Brigham, and Mary Ann Millsap

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The year 1983 was a milestone for American educational reform. The publication in that year of A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) and innumerable other reform reports created a crisis mentality among policymakers and led to a host of reform efforts, which were undertaken primarily at the state level.

These efforts took a "ready, fire, aim" approach to alleviating the problems in American education identified by literature that connected America's economic decline with failures in education. Using international comparisons, the literature posited that American students lack functional literacy, as well as the higher-order skills, that they must have to compete in the world labor market of the 21st Century (National Commission, 1983).

In response to the reform literature's emphasis on the importance of a "trained labor force," economic revitalization through educational reform became a pervasive political theme of the 1980s. Every state considered policies intended to increase academic rigor, improve the quality of the teaching force, and enhance knowledge about student performance. Most states enacted policies that entailed more state specification about curriculum, teacher credentials, and the assessment of student outcomes. Education was the most salient state political issue in the midyears of the decade; it dominated governors' state-of-the-state messages and legislative agendas between 1984 and 1988 (Fuhrman, 1989).

By the time the legislative dust cleared, 45 states had modified high school graduation requirements, 38 states had increased mathematics and science requirements, and 46 states were mandating some type of teacher competency

assessment (Darling-Hammond and Berry, 1988). Student testing programs became virtually universal with 31 state testing programs initiated and 11 others poised to begin between 1988 and 1990.

The Policy Issue for the Study

Many common themes characterized the first wave of reforms noted above, including the fact that most dealt with the way that basic educational services are delivered. However, another set of concerns is beginning to receive more scrutiny and policy attention (Rothman, 1989). These concerns deal with the results and aftermath of secondary and postsecondary education and include the following goals:

- Improving high school completion rates.
- Enhancing preparedness for postsecondary education, as well as career planning for high school students.
- Increasing enrollment, including minority enrollment, in postsecondary education.
- Preparing a competitive work force.

To address these policy concerns, this study focused on policies and program initiatives affecting the middle range of high school students. Adapting the definition of average students that is used by the College Board, "middle range" was defined as students who are score between the 30th and 70th percentiles on standardized tests and who are neither relatively assured of success in college nor clients of remedial or developmental programs.

This group of students was the focus for a number of reasons. They are the untapped resources of the future economy who were called "a case of the mysterious middle" in a New York Times special supplement on November 5, 1989 (Barron, p. 27). These students are an appropriate focus for examining mainstream education initiatives because they are its major target. While higher-achieving students generally have access to the resources they need, and the most disadvantaged and at-risk students are the target of many special and

compensatory programs, average students generally receive a mainstream education without special attention.

Among middle-range students, this study emphasizes the large number that come from low-income families and from families in which the parents did not attend college. These students may come from families in which college education is not regarded as a realistic choice or where parents have limited abilities to help their children find an appropriate place in the work world. These disadvantages usually are aggravated by gaps in the support system that high school students need to help them fulfill their college or employment potential.

Middle-range high school students often receive an unchallenging, watered-down curriculum that prepares them neither for postsecondary education nor for the work force (Powell, Farrar, and Cohen, 1985). Yet, numerous such high school students of average ability from low-income families have shown real tenacity and effort by maintaining good school attendance, achieving satisfactory academic records, and contributing to their school and community. Nonetheless, they run grave risks of failing to fulfill their potential for a variety of reasons:

- They may fail to graduate from high school because they become immersed in personal or family problems, become parents, succumb to an immediate chance to earn money, or simply underestimate the lifelong financial and other dividends of earning a diploma.
- They may fail to apply for admission to college or other postsecondary education programs for which their abilities and achievements qualify them because of the lack of information, guidance, support, high school preparation, and assistance needed to do so.
- Even after graduating from high school, they may fail to begin their careers in a job that develops their abilities because they lack the contacts and skills necessary to obtain such a job (National Career Beginnings, no date).

This issue has particular significance for the South, which is undergoing active economic development. As The Report on the 1986 Commission on the Future of the South points out, only 68 percent of southern ninth graders graduate from high school, and high school seniors in the South score lower on

college boards than those from most other states (Southern Growth Policies Board, 1988).

The 1986 National Assessment of Educational Progress notes that, although performance of black students (many of them in the South) in mathematics has increased relative to past assessments, the net gains have been confined to lower-order skills. Improvements are needed not only in average proficiency, but also in the number of students who reach upper levels of performance. (Dossey et al., 1988)

Purpose and Organization of the Report

This report is the result of a "Study to Define Educational Reform Options Targeted to Middle-Range High School Students" to increase their high school graduation rates, enrollment and success in postsecondary institutions, and ability to contribute to the economic development of the region. Policy and program options were examined that have been used to address these goals. The report is intended to assist educational policymakers in the Southeast region and elsewhere who wish to explore such options.

The remainder of this introductory chapter presents an overview of the study methods, including the development of typologies to describe state policy roles in stimulating educational reform and to capture program initiatives that target or address middle-range students. Criteria for assessing the influence of these state policy roles and the "implementability" of the various types of program initiatives are briefly discussed. It is suggested that the busy policymaker or reader with limited time read the rest of this introduction, as well the summary for his/her state provided in Appendix C.

The second chapter of this paper describes and analyzes in detail three identified roles of state policymakers that support educational initiatives for middle-range students: school improvement efforts, individual student performance incentives (or disincentives), and promotion of cross-agency collaboratives.

Five different types of program initiatives that address middle-range students are presented and analyzed in the third chapter. These types include alternative schooling programs, school-based support services, externally based support services, collaboratives, and indirect services such as curriculum and staff development efforts.

The final chapter presents study conclusions. This is followed by references and three appendices. The first appendix consists of copies of study forms and instruments. The second appendix, which is the subject of a separate research brief, provides brief descriptions of program initiatives addressing middle-range students. The final appendix provides individual state summaries for each of the six SEIL-member states on the status of educational reform and current educational issues, as well as identifying state policies and programs that exist for middle-range students.

Overview of Study Methods and Findings

Information for this report was drawn from three sources: a review of policy and research literature relevant to the topic; an examination of appropriate policy and program documents and legislation; and direct telephone interviews with over 100 individuals in state government agencies, school districts, universities, nonprofit educational service organizations, and foundations. Using these data sources, an array of policy roles and program types was developed that can serve middle-range students.

Several steps were used in the data collection process:

- Developing a list of nominators for policies and programs.
- Conducting interviews with nominators.
- Selecting policies and programs for review.
- Conducting interviews with key informants regarding the policies and programs.

Copies of the instruments used in the nominating, screening, and interview processes are found in Appendix A.

Criteria for selecting initiatives. The criteria for including program initiatives and state policies in the information-gathering phase of the study were two simple and inclusive questions:

- Does the policy or program address the target group?
- Does the policy or program fall within the areas of interest in terms of affecting high school success or postsecondary enrollment?

Because there are very few initiatives that directly target middle-range students, policies and program initiatives were selected that address the central policy concerns of the study, those that: demonstrably improve access to postsecondary education for minorities and first-generation college students, increase the probability of high school graduation, provide support and incentives to students, increase academic readiness, or involve outside partners in the education process.

Typologies of State Policy Roles and Program Initiatives

State Policy Roles. Examination of the current set of state policies showed that states appear to play three major roles in stimulating reform. These are:

- The role the state plays in school improvement by mandating or stimulating local organizational response.
- The role the state plays in providing incentives or disincentives for individual student performance.
- The role the state plays in promoting collaborations across agencies responsible for secondary and postsecondary education; these may serve to promote outreach from postsecondary institutions to high school students or may be initiatives to increase student access to postsecondary institutions.

Criteria for Assessing State Policy Roles. A set of criteria was developed to assess the ability of the state to influence local organizational behavior based on the strategies used in the various roles. These strategies are the active dimension of the states' roles vis-a-vis local districts as they issue directives, supply resources, or furnish technical assistance.

Three categories were used to classify strategies according to their ability to influence local response. The definitions of influence are:

HIGH: The state exerts influence through mandates and compliance monitoring in organizations over which it has authority and control; as a result, there is little variation in local response.

MEDIUM: The state exerts influence through incentives and technical assistance in organizations in which it has direct influence; as a result, there is flexibility allowed in local response.

LOW: The state can exert little influence because organizations are external; as a result, flexibility and variation in local response are implicit.

Program Initiatives. The program initiatives that serve the target group of the study were clustered into five types:

- Alternative schooling programs.
- School-based support services.
- Externally based support services.
- Collaboratives.
- Initiatives that serve students indirectly, such as curriculum development and staff development.

Criteria for Assessing Program Initiatives. As a means of providing guidance to policymakers, the strengths and weaknesses of program initiatives were assessed and rated on dimensions related both to how readily the programs could be established by state policy and how easily the programs could be implemented at the local level. The first set of criteria takes a state perspective by examining the extent to which different types of program initiatives can be brought about by state policy. The extent of state influence is important because many promising programs were found that were initiated at the local level or by organizations outside of the traditional educational system (e.g., private-sector organizations, community-based organizations, or universities). These programs may be less amenable to

traditional state policy tactics and require policymakers to consider different approaches to dissemination and adoption.

Two categories for describing the amenability of program implementation to state policy were established. Their definitions are:

HIGH: States can influence program implementation through mandates or incentives; as a result, target organizations are operating within a traditional educational sphere.

LOW: States can influence only through incentives; as a result, target organizations are generally outside of the traditional educational sphere.

The second set of criteria takes a local perspective, examining program initiatives in a more pragmatic manner. Here, a judgment is made of the "implementability" of certain program types, based on the ease with which school districts or schools can acquire the resources and expertise needed to establish them. Three categories were used, classifying program types as high, medium, or low in amenability to local implementation. Their definitions are:

HIGH: Complexity of initiative is low; as a result, expertise is available locally or easily obtainable, and few additional local resources are necessary.

MEDIUM: Complexity is moderate; as a result, expertise is available locally or easily obtainable, and few additional local resources are necessary.

LOW: Complexity is high; as a result, special expertise is required but difficult to obtain, and many additional resources are necessary.

In summary, three sets of criteria are used in this report, each set containing two or three descriptive dimensions. The first set of criteria assesses strategies used by states to achieve their policy aims. The second and third sets of criteria are applied to programs examining, from the state perspective, how readily the state can establish different types of programs at the local level and, from the local perspective, how easy it is to put the

program in place, using locally available resources. The chart below captures the key elements of the criteria.

Assessment Target	Dimensions	Categories
State Policy Roles	Influence on Local Behavior	High, Medium, Low
Program Initiative	Amenability to State Policy	High, Low
Program Initiative	Implementability From Local Perspective	High, Medium, Low

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE STATE POLICY ROLE

There is a wide range of organizations and individuals that can be involved in efforts to serve middle-range high school students. Although varying from state to state according to context, policies were found that may be initiated from any of the following sources: legislative committees and the legislature; governors' task forces and staff; state boards of education (which may initiate, as well as set, regulations and guidelines for legislative mandates); and, of course, state education agencies.

These agencies may be sources of policies in many spheres of education, including the population of interest in this study. The policies may be generated on the bandwagon of national trends (e.g., increasing academic standards and high school graduation requirements); in response to locally perceived needs (e.g., the need to increase the pool of minority teachers); or in response to the mounting evidence of the effectiveness of certain programmatic initiatives (e.g., the support of particular alternative school strategies, such as the High School Academy model).

Given that the current wave of reform stemmed from concerns about the nation's economic future, it is not surprising that much of the leadership in the reform process at the state level comes from legislative bodies and the business community, rather than educators. However, despite the importance of actors such as these outside the education network in spurring change and garnering resources for it, state boards of education and state education agencies remain the key vehicles for translating the new policies into practice.

Few state policy initiatives were found that are consciously directed to meet the special needs of the middle-range students, and even fewer exist that assist them in increasing their aspirations and preparation for postsecondary education. However, there are the three roles that were identified previously that the state plays in educational policy and that are relevant to the target group:

- The role the state plays in school improvement by mandating or stimulating a local organizational response.

- The role the state plays in providing incentives or disincentives for individual student performance.

- The role the state plays in promoting collaborations across agencies responsible for secondary and postsecondary education; these may serve to promote outreach from postsecondary institutions to high school students or be initiatives to increase student access to postsecondary institutions.

The first role is the one that states have traditionally played vis-a-vis local districts. The other two are evolving roles that require new expertise on the part of policymakers and state education agency personnel. Although currently not as well understood, these roles will likely be important in meeting the goals of educational reform in the last decade of the century.

The following sections present some descriptions of how states carry out each of these roles. Elements of the policy initiatives in the six states in the SEIL region, as well as other states, are used to illustrate types of initiatives. Strengths and weaknesses in terms of influencing local behavior are also discussed. State-by-state summaries of relevant reform initiatives in the SEIL region appear in Appendix C. These summaries highlight the most recent major educational reform efforts in the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

The Role of the State in School Improvement

Traditionally, states have exerted strong influence on local school districts and school activity through regulation, such as setting and monitoring minimum standards, and through oversight and monitoring for compliance. In response to frustration with the status of educational performance, this state role has been modified to include assistance and persuasion, as well as the more traditional compliance orientation.

In reviewing initiatives undertaken by states in their school improvement role, three types of state/local policy relationships or strategies were observed that are commonly used:

- o Type 1: States put forth global, but specified, mandates; locals must develop and implement their own response to be in compliance; prime examples are increased graduation requirements and performance-based accreditation systems.

- o Type 2: States develop, design, or adopt specific initiatives that are offered to local schools or districts for adoption; locals implement voluntarily but may incorporate variation in implementation; an example is the support of curriculum innovations such as writing or higher-order thinking skills.

- o Type 3: States promote a goal-oriented or outcomes model and provide incentives for locals to develop a response; examples include restructuring initiatives and dropout prevention initiatives that may also meet the needs of the middle-range students.

Type 1: Mandates Requiring Local Compliance. Among the most common form of state educational reform initiatives that indirectly affect middle-range students are the global mandates that characterized the first wave of reform in the early 1980s. These are most typified by the widespread mandate of increased high school graduation requirements (a factor in the reforms in 45 states nationwide, including all of the states in the SEIL region). Another example is the provision of performance-based accreditation or accountability systems involving the development of minimum performance levels for students and providing gates for promotion or graduation. These have been mandated in all six SEIL-member states. Mandated staffing levels are also a feature of some state reforms, such as the Basic Education Plan in North Carolina. Thus, the educational reform movement of the 1980s was primarily a regulatory reform that did not address the substance of instruction.

Changes such as longer school days, minimum grade-point averages for graduation, no pass/no play policies, and homework and attendance policies were much rarer (Fuhrman, Firestone, and Kirst, 1989), but are also examples of this type of mandate. Although targeted system-wide and not to particular groups of students, these policies have major implications for middle-range students who may be the group most affected by their implementation. Middle-range students become the de facto targets of education policy because students who are most at risk frequently drop out of school before they achieve the minimum levels,

while the highest-achieving students are likely to attain beyond the mandated levels.

To date, there is little evidence of the effectiveness of mandated reforms using such typical school improvement indicators as increases in achievement levels, graduation rates, or postsecondary preparedness and enrollment. Nonetheless, according to a recent report from the Center for Policy Research in Education (Fuhrman, Clune, and Elmore, 1989), the new graduation requirements and testing policies have affected the high school curriculum to some extent. The requirements focused the high school curriculum more coherently around academic courses and skills in academic subjects. They also resulted in more uniform courses and competencies within curricula among schools and across districts. What they did not do, however, was result in a high-level academic curriculum for all students since the new courses taken by middle- and lower-achieving students are primarily at the basic and general level (Goertz, 1989).

The strengths and weaknesses of this role are, in fact, the traditional strengths and weaknesses of state education agencies. Mandates are strong tools because they address the core structures of education and demonstrate measurable outcomes. However, implementation tends to consume internal resources at the local level, and it is all too easy for implementation to take a compliance orientation, emphasizing form rather than substance. Finally, the ability of the state to provide technical assistance to overcome these problems tends to be strained by lack of expertise and personnel. However, given the direct control that the state maintains over local school organization in this posture, the likelihood of local response is HIGH.

Type 2: Specific and Focused Initiatives, With Incentives for Implementation. States may adopt policy initiatives, not global in nature, but rather specific substantive efforts that contribute to school improvement. Many of these are not mandated but are incentives provided for local adoption, including financial subsidies. Typically, specific and focused initiatives tend to be in areas of curriculum reform and are characteristic of the second wave of reform.

The second wave, spurred by national and international assessments showing U.S. students lagging far behind their counterparts in other industrialized countries, is led by subject area groups and educational reform leaders who are calling for sweeping reforms geared to advance the preparation of all students. The proposals focus on such themes as:

- o More emphasis on problem-solving or higher-order thinking skills.
- o Sharper focus on active participation of students (also known as "questioning" activities).
- o More attention to relating school work to students' everyday lives.
- o More attention to writing, or communication in general, throughout the curriculum.
- o A more streamlined secondary curriculum, keyed to core learning objectives within each content area.

Thus, across the nation and within the SEIL region (e.g., North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama), states are promoting specific initiatives related to curriculum, such as writing projects, critical thinking skills, and math/science networks. Many of these are staff development efforts, subsidized through state funds. Although not directly targeted to middle-range students, many respondents suggested that these initiatives serve that student group especially well. They do so by improving instructional strategies in areas beyond the core curriculum subjects and by helping students to attain the kinds of skills they need to gain access to and succeed in postsecondary education.

The strength of this strategy is that it allows local flexibility in adoption, still addresses the substantive core of education, and provides measurable outcomes. However, technical assistance is key to its success, and, without available assistance, there is a possibility that the variation in adoption will be inappropriate or ineffective. Although the state influences both the implementing organizations and the models available for implementation, local variability can reduce the power of state control. Thus, policies enacted using this strategy are ranked MEDIUM in their likelihood for stimulating local response.

Type 3: State Promotion of Outcomes-Based Planning and Support of Local Response Initiatives. A new wave of school improvement initiatives has moved away from both global mandates and specific programmatic initiatives. This view supports the notion that school improvement and the improvement of education for any specific target group is a systems problem and that the solutions require restructuring of schools. Proponents of restructuring, among whom are many state policymakers, argue that major overhauls are needed in order to address the needs of all students (including middle-range students). Commonly accepted school structures and practices--supported by outmoded traditions and erroneous assumptions--constitute institutional barriers to all students' learning (Sizer, 1985), and they erect nearly insurmountable obstacles to those students most affected by social and economic disadvantage (Keating and Oakes, 1983).

A response to this approach has been a cluster of educational reform options that do not mandate specific outcomes but rather support outcomes-based planning and implementation of "restructured schools" with the support of incentive grants. North Carolina's recently passed School Improvement and Accountability Act of 1989, also known as Senate Bill 2, falls in this category. Dade County, Florida, is a pioneer or "lighthouse" district in its restructuring initiative.

The restructuring movement is new, and there is no available evidence of its impact on middle-range students or others. However, many Alternative Schooling Programs described in this report, especially those within the Coalition of Essential Schools, are prototypes of the restructuring approach and demonstrate great promise of effectiveness.

Typical of less global and open-ended outcomes-based reform initiatives that affect the middle-range student population are dropout prevention efforts. These are initiatives that are designed for meeting the needs of potential school dropouts but that may also be useful for middle-range students. Almost all states (and all those in the SEIL region) have some set of "at-risk" youth or dropout prevention activities in which the goals are to increase retention in school and to increase graduation rates. Local schools and districts have

produced different types of responses to reach these goals, sometimes supported by external organizations, as well as the state. Depending on how these programs have been designed, middle-range students may benefit.

Although restructuring and dropout prevention are currently among the "hottest" topics in education, it is important to note that both of these initiatives fall within the traditional role of the states. While the activities (particularly in restructuring) are innovative and frequently highlight local planning, the role played by the state tends to remain within its established domain of school improvement.

The greatest strengths of the outcomes-based strategy are its inherent local flexibility and its broad potential impact on the instructional domain. However, of the three strategies within the state's school improvement role, the need for technical assistance is most critical in this strategy, and that need is accompanied by an equally great need for ingenuity and expertise at the local level. The potential for success in influencing local behavior using this approach is strongly mediated by enhanced local control; thus the outcomes-based strategy ranks MEDIUM in its influence on local behavior.

In all options related to playing a successful role in school improvement, states must expand their capacity to provide technical assistance, even within scarce resources. One way of doing so is to take advantage of the existing expertise at the local level by increasing local flexibility and providing greater encouragement to local innovation activities.

The Role of the State in Providing Incentives (or Disincentives) for Individual Student Performance

In addition to state educational policy initiatives supporting school improvement, state policies have also been enacted that provide incentives and support for individual student performance, many of which are particularly applicable to middle-range high school students. These are diverse and cover a wide range of initiatives and activities. Examples include the following:

- Florida has recently passed legislation allowing a "Gold Seal Diploma" in vocational education; graduating students who have a 3.5 average and have completed a vocational program will be eligible for a $2,000 a year scholarship to a postsecondary institution in Florida, similar to the state's Academic Scholars Program.

- Florida has followed West Virginia's lead in barring drivers' licenses to high school dropouts until age 18 (with some local exceptions), thus providing a disincentive to dropping out.

- Many states have a Governor's Program supporting Residential Summer Programs on college campuses. In North Carolina, this kind of program was offered to middle-range, as well as highest-level, students.

One strength of these initiatives is that they are enormously appealing to the public. Another strength is that they tend to be low in cost and can be implemented independently of local bureaucracy. However, they are limited in scope and entail possible inequities in the application of both sanctions and rewards. Since this role bypasses schools districts and schools, there is no influence on local organizational behavior; thus, the ranking is NOT APPLICABLE. Options for alteration in this state role include incorporating an increased local role in planning and carrying out the initiatives and facilitating the creation of locally developed services.

The Role of the State in Promoting Collaboration Across Agencies Responsible for Secondary and Postsecondary Education

A major factor in improving access of middle-range and minority students to postsecondary institutions is to increase collaboration and information sharing across the educational systems. This is not as easy as it appears. The three educational systems--K-12, community colleges and vocational/technical institutions, and the state university systems--are separate domains competing for state and other resources, and, more often than not, they are administered by separate agencies at the state level.

Formal communication systems and formal articulation across the systems are relatively rare, but they do exist. State policymakers increasingly recognize that such agreements are necessary to facilitate access to postsecondary education and to make education complementary and effective across

institutions. For example, one problem faced by middle-range students is that, despite increased high school graduation requirements, they may fail to qualify for university admission because the entrance requirements have become more stringent. To address this problem, the following types of initiatives have been enacted:

- The state of North Carolina has mandated that the three systems must collaborate and that their representatives must meet at least once a year.
- Two-plus-two articulation agreements are in place in many states; for example, they are being implemented widely in Florida and are being planned in Georgia.
- College Outreach Programs, such as one supported by an initiative in Florida, provide assistance to high school students to gain access to college.
- A number of curriculum or staff development programs, such as the Writing Network and the Math/Science Network in North Carolina, are collaborations between postsecondary and secondary institutions and are supported through state policy initiatives.
- Aided by the College Board EQuality Project, Tennessee and Rhode Island have established collaborative arrangements at both the state and institutional levels, including high school and college faculty jointly defining and integrating curriculum offerings.

It is important to note that many collaborations across secondary and postsecondary institutions are not part of state policy initiatives. Many creative partnerships provide direct and indirect services to students, including middle-range students. Some of these are discussed in Chapter Three; others appear in Appendix B.

There are no inherent weaknesses in this state role, but there is a major problem. Models for interorganization collaboration are rare, and organizational resistance continues at the agency level in many states. The major strength of this role is that it increases interorganization linkages (thus increasing the effectiveness and the efficiency of both organizations) and, for purposes of this study, that it directly addresses the needs of average students. However, since the influence of the state is limited and since collaboration lacks champions in influential places, the role of the

state on promoting collaborations is ranked LOW. Options for change rest on increasing the incentives for undertaking collaborative arrangements and targeting technical assistance efforts directly at this type of initiative.

A brief review of the state roles discussed here appears in the Summary Table at the end of this chapter. The table condenses several elements, including the assessments. In one column, the table summarizes the strengths of each state role, including potential outcomes; there is also a column that summarizes the weaknesses of the various roles, stressing needs for additional resources, expertise, and technical assistance. Finally, the Summary Table offers some options that states may consider for altering aspects of these roles in order to make them more effective.

The Summary Table is intended for use as a reference guide for policymakers. In using the guide, it is important to weigh the assessment of influence against the strengths and weaknesses of various options. For example, while mandates rank HIGH in their likelihood to influence local behavior, the results they achieve may be more form than substance unless the state is willing to augment local expertise through technical assistance. Similarly, the attractiveness of the outcomes-based model must be balanced against the burden it places on district expertise. Finally, policymakers must make choices about suitable strategies based on many considerations beyond the scope of the Summary Table, including such political realities as the balance of power between state and local districts.

Summary Table: Assessment of State Policy Roles

State Role	Target	Strengths	Weaknesses	Ability to Influence Local Schools	Alteration Options
School improvement: mandates	Schools/school districts	Address educational core; have measurable outcomes.	Consume internal resources; tend to have a compliance orientation; lack expertise for providing technical assistance; outcomes may show more form than substance.	High	Increase capacity for providing technical assistance; increase local flexibility.
School improvement: incentives for focused initiatives	Schools/school districts	Provide local flexibility in adoption; address educational core; measurable outcomes may result in strong focus on academic readiness.	Lack expertise for providing technical assistance; lead to possibly inappropriate use without technical assistance.	Medium	Increase capacity for providing technical assistance; increase local flexibility.
School improvement: outcomes-based models	Schools/school districts	Offer local flexibility, with potential broad scope and strong outcomes.	Need technical assistance; require local ingenuity.	Medium	Increase capacity for providing technical assistance; increase local flexibility.
Provision of incentives that target students	Elementary/secondary students	Directly addresses average students; many are low in cost.	Is limited in scope, with possible inequities in application.	Not applicable	Facilitate individual services at local level; build in increased local role.
Promotion of interorganization collaboration	Postsecondary and secondary organizations	Strengthens linkages; directly addresses average students; improves access to postsecondary institutions	None	Low	Increase technical assistance; provide increased incentives.

This table examines both the traditional and emerging roles played by state policymakers in influencing educational policy at the local level. It also assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the roles played by these state policymakers and their ability to influence local education decisions using different policy strategies.

CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM INITIATIVES

The recent approach to reform described above differs from the first educational reform wave because it concerns the substance of instruction and delivery of services more than the regulation of educational institutions. Some authors believe that the first wave of reform tended to constrain the substance of instruction.

> Some believed in the necessity of the first wave reforms but others recognized that the reforms were both limited and limiting . . . (in that they) centralized authority for educational policymaking, thus increasing rules and regulations . . . . The first wave did not add new capacity to our education system or try to take on fundamental problems that diminished and constrained the intellectual capacity of children. (Hawley, 1988, pp. 416-437)

When authors and reformers talk about "substance," they are referring to programs and practices--the activities that form the core of education. A major purpose of this study has been to examine such programs and practices in terms of their effect on the middle-range student. This examination is timely. We are focusing our "flashlight" on promising practices just as the national spotlight is turning to programmatic needs.

For this study, programs are defined as sets of activities intended to modify behavior in ways that facilitate meeting policy objectives. Programs may be designed or initiated by policymakers at the state level or may be designed or adopted by policymakers or practitioners at the local level.

In the course of this study, information was collected on more than 50 programs and other initiatives that address the needs of middle-range students. Through telephone interviews and written documentation, there was an attempt to obtain data for each initiative on the following dimensions that are key to program implementation:

- Goals.
- Target population.

- o Origin/source/administration.
- o Nature of the intervention.
- o Locus of the intervention.
- o Evidence of effectiveness.
- o Cost indicators.

Not surprisingly, the quality and quantity of available information was uneven--with cost and effectiveness data the most difficult to obtain. Thus, it was not possible to assess the effectiveness of programs at the individual level; rather, the program information was generalized into categories of program types, and then their strengths and weaknesses were examined at that level. Five program types were identified. Four of these involve direct services to students; a fifth assists students indirectly. These are:

- o Alternative schooling programs.
- o School-based support services.
- o Externally based support services.
- o Collaboratives.
- o Indirect services, such as staff development and curriculum development.

Each of these program types is described below with examples, strengths and weaknesses, and amenability to state policy.

Program Type I: Alternative Schooling Programs

Programs that provide alternative schooling are the broadest and most intense services identified. The salient characteristic of these programs is that they provide instruction to students in a place other than the traditional classroom--in another building or another part of the same building. They may involve full-day or partial-day instruction and generally target small groups of students. The aspect that distinguishes this type of program from others in the study is that alternative schooling programs provide core curriculum to students, although they may involve enrichment and support services as well.

The following are examples of this type of program. Others on which information was obtained are described in Appendix B.

The Academies: These alternative high school structures originated as the Philadelphia High School Academies in the 1960s. Designed on a similar model, the Peninsula Academies began in 1981 at the Sequoia Union High School District in California and are being replicated in many California sites under state sponsorship and with state funding.

An Academy involves a modified high school curriculum and structure with exposure to local companies and jobs. Academies may be viewed as high school programs with some special added elements including:

- Programs targeting students who show academic potential, but whose past performance indicates that they are in danger of dropping out.
- A school-within-a-school administrative structure in which students in grades 10-12 enroll as a group in three core academic subjects, including English and mathematics, with selected teachers.
- A technical course in grades 10-12 designed to provide students with basic job skills in a promising labor-market field (e.g., electronics or health) located nearby.
- Strong support from local businesses, including assistance in curriculum development and provision of guest speakers, field trip sites, mentors, and work experience.
- High school and district support for the program, providing the necessary teacher preparation time, facilities, equipment, curriculum development, and counseling support.

The current academies represent three-way partnerships among the state, local school districts, and supporting companies. The academies are intended to reduce dropout rates by improving students' motivation to perform well in school, graduate, and make a successful transition from school to work. The evidence thus far available (and that from earlier programs on which the academy idea is based) suggests that the academies are successful, not only in preparing students for the world of work, but also in motivating students to continue their education in postsecondary institutions. An evaluation by the

Far West Laboratory documenting the outcomes in terms of student achievement, attendance, and perceptions will be available soon.

Alternative Schools in the Coalition of Essential Schools: The Coalition is a collection of more than 50 elementary and secondary schools across the country that seek to alter schooling practices in line with the recommendations proposed in Theodore Sizer's Horace's Compromise . . . (1985). As appearing in Lazarson's review of A Study of High Schools (1986), six central features of these schools are:

- Giving students and teachers more autonomy.
- Taking different learning patterns into account.
- Insisting upon student mastery.
- Making thoroughness count more than breadth in course content.
- Focusing students on using their minds.
- Greatly simplifying the school day and the organizational structure of schooling.

Strengths and Weaknesses: The strength of alternative schooling programs lies in their comprehensiveness and intensity. They assist middle-range students by directly improving their skills and their academic preparation for postsecondary education. These initiatives generally have measurable outcomes and thus can demonstrate their degrees of effectiveness. Because they take place separately from the mainstream of instruction, they are highly visible and frequently infuse new resources into the school system. They are also attractive to teachers and provide a high quality of teacher working life.

The major weaknesses of such programs are that they are very costly and consume a large amount of resources to serve a proportionally small number of students. Such programs also require considerable expertise and intensive effort to implement. Thus, they are ranked LOW on their amenability to implementation using local resources.

Amenability to Policy: Since alternative programs are usually offered through school district organizations and generally receive funds either from or through the state, they are ranked HIGH in their amenability to policy intervention. States that aspire to increase the number of alternative schooling programs might take such steps as expanding the exposure of local districts to innovative models, supporting school-based decision making in the selection of models, and/or increasing flexibility in the way schools operate as a way to facilitate the implementation of these programs.

Program Type II: School-Based Support Services

Enrichment and support services that provide mentors, tutors, guidance, and exposure to the outside world were among the most popular of the programs encountered. Frequently, the goals of these initiatives include raising aspirations, boosting self-esteem, or helping students to "find themselves." Programs are placed in this category if they are operated by secondary schools even if the program is adopted, adapted, or purchased from outside the district.

The program examples are among the most prevalent that were discovered in the study. Some illustrative summaries appear below.

Adopt-a-Student: This program, one of many unrelated programs using the same name, is operating in one South Carolina district where volunteer teachers are matched with middle-range students who need extra attention and informal guidance on a one-to-one basis. The program is locally funded (but requires very little money) and is currently serving 47 of the 2,200 students at Ermo High School in Columbia, South Carolina.

Teacher as Advisor: The state of Florida operates a program with similar goals. In this state-funded "Teacher as Adviser" program, some teachers receive release time to supplement guidance staff and serve as advisers to groups of up to 15 students on such topics as motivation, career choices, and college preparation. The state funds are used to support the release time from teaching. The success of this program is reported to vary, depending on the

calibre of the teacher training and the support of administrators in any given district.

Strengths and Weaknesses: One strength of these school-based support services is that they nurture the "whole student," concentrating their attention on such important components of success in school and life as self-esteem and ambition. These programs address many of the problems that prevent middle-range students from graduating from high school and fulfilling their potential. Additional strengths are that these programs are not costly to operate or burdensome to install. Finally, most school districts have the expertise to design and maintain them with their existing personnel and funds. For that reason, they are ranked HIGH on amenability to implementation.

The weaknesses of school-based support services lie in their lack of visibility and low intensity, which make them extremely vulnerable to criticism and a likely target for local budget cuts. Lacking visibility, they also do not generally have measurable outcomes, and their effectiveness is very difficult to estimate. Another weakness of these initiatives is that, although they do not consume a large amount of resource capital, the resources they do consume are generally internal and local and thus dependent on an often unstable local political and economic environment.

Amenability to Policy: Since school-based support services are "add-on" endeavors to the instructional core, and the programs are generally customized to meet locally perceived needs, the involvement of the state tends to be limited. However, because these programs take place through school organizations, their amenability to state policy remains HIGH, although not frequently exercised. To facilitate these services, states might examine options such as redefining teacher and counselor roles or funding release time of teachers to participate.

Program Type III: Externally Based Support Services

Although some support service programs are school-based, a large number are supported or delivered by organizations that are external to the school systems. Two major kinds of programs fit into this category. The most

prevalent are services that are administered by postsecondary institutions. These generally attempt to raise the skills, aspirations, and goals of secondary students and/or to introduce them to the expectations of postsecondary education. In some cases, the goals of the program may include recruitment of students to the postsecondary institution providing the service. Although these programs may be titled partnerships or collaboratives, they are, in fact, a means of providing services from postsecondary to secondary levels of education.

Programs in this category also are operated by other organizations outside the school district, such as community-based organizations or the private sector, both nonprofit and for profit. These entities seem to serve several purposes: garnering resources from the private sector, keeping the programs separate from school district politics, and facilitating linkages with local business and industry. The following examples present this program type in some of its many forms. Other examples appear in Appendix B.

The Trio Programs: Federally funded and operated through universities and school districts, the trio is an effort of the U.S. Department of Education and includes "Talent Search," "Upward Bound," and "Student Support Services." The first two programs target high school students; the third provides remedial education that serves freshmen in college.

Of the three programs, the most multifaceted is "Upward Bound," which is described as it operates at Clark Atlanta University. The program has been operating there for 26 years and is targeted to first-generation college students, especially blacks and other minorities. During the academic year, classes are held on campus and taught by college professors or high school teachers. There are afternoon elective classes for students in grades nine through twelve and Saturday classes from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Students are provided with breakfast and lunch money and a weekly stipend for transportation. The centerpiece of the program is the six-week summer session in which students live on campus and take college-type classes. There is also a budget to provide cultural activities and outside speakers. Last year, 18 students participated in the program, of whom 10 are currently attending Clark.

Career Beginnings: This program also operates at the national level, is funded by several foundations, and is administered through Brandeis University. Career Beginnings is targeted to students who are termed "tenacious juniors"--those who have never excelled academically but who have persisted in attending school and are considered average students. The students are generally economically disadvantaged, and many are minorities. The core elements of the model are:

- o A tripartite involvement of the school district, the university, and mentoring provided through area business or industry.
- o Summer enrichment programs offered through the university.
- o Summer jobs in an area of career interest.
- o Mentoring offered by successful practitioners in the student's field of career interest.

The program also may include tutoring and additional counseling within the high school and assistance in applying to colleges. The effectiveness of the program varies across sites; two that appear especially effective are operating in Cleveland, Ohio, and Gary, Indiana.

The Higher Education Partnership in Boston: Greater Boston colleges and universities have provided at least $37 million in scholarships, grants, and academic programs for Boston parents, teachers, and students in the past five years. Twenty-two public and private institutions have developed pairings with the Boston public schools as an outgrowth of the 1975 federal court desegregation plan, which required the schools to couple with colleges in an attempt to improve student performance.

Each participating high school has a college or university coordinator who provides services directly, as well as arranges other activities. In addition to providing financial aid, activities include: summer on-campus programs, Saturday sessions during the school year, enrollment in college courses, college-student tutoring of high school students, and career and college counseling. Support for the Partnership comes from individual colleges and universities, state desegregation funds, and Board of Regents' grants.

Strengths and Weaknesses: Like school-based services, these externally based initiatives reach large numbers of students and frequently nurture students' self-esteem and raise their aspirations. The programs are not expensive for school organizations since the major costs are borne by outside organizations. These programs permeate school boundaries and introduce elements such as mentoring, career awareness, and exposure of high school students to postsecondary education. These program initiatives also infuse outside resources into the school system. Although they are cost-effective and not difficult to implement, externally based support services are rated only MEDIUM in their amenability to local implementation because they depend on the availability of external resources and the cooperation of actors outside the school organization.

As with other support services, these programs are low in intensity, and it is difficult to measure their effectiveness. The advantage of externally based support services over school-based support services lies in the fact that they tend to use outside resources and to be more visible and thus more popular in the community.

Amenability to Policy: The influence of the state tends to be variable in this program type. Where the postsecondary services are offered through the state university system, the extent of coordination between state agencies may be the most important factor. Another important consideration is that postsecondary institutions are limited in funds, and programs such as those we are describing here are "add-ons" and, therefore, easily eliminated. Where independent agencies operate programs, the state may have very little influence on the program operation. Overall, externally based support services are considered LOW in their amenability to the influence of state policy.

Options that states might consider to facilitate externally based support services include the provision of incentives for state-operated postsecondary institutions to administer such programs. Funding, directives, or a combination of the two might be considered as incentives. States may also increase flexibility in ways that encourage the permeability of school

boundaries for program models that involve mentoring, shadowing, and after-school activities that bring "outsiders" into the schools.

Program Type IV: Collaboratives

Collaboratives are programs that feature partnerships, rather than the simple provision of services. Collaboratives involve partners from outside the educational establishment and can be distinguished from other types of programs because they involve responsibilities on the part of both participants; these responsibilities are generally codified in some kind of agreement. An emerging type of collaborative is the recently popular wave of incentives offered by businesses (or individuals who head businesses) directly to high school students to encourage them to complete high school and go to college. In this case, the "collaborative" is between the business and the student and does not directly involve the school organization at all.

True collaboratives among organizations are rare. However, two examples are given below, as well as two others that illustrate the business-student collaborative model. Others appear in Appendix B.

The Boston Compact: Although not specifically targeted to students in the middle academic range, many of the students involved in the Boston Compact come from that group. Started in 1982, the Compact was a citywide public school improvement program that attracted much attention as a set of promising approaches for dealing with the problems that prevented urban youth from graduating from high school and either getting a meaningful job or going to college. The Compact is, in fact, a treaty, a set of mutual promises. Boston business, university, and trade union leaders signed agreements with the Boston Public Schools to establish and meet measurable admission and hiring goals with the aim of increasing youth employment and higher education opportunities. In return, the school district pledged to improve student achievement, attendance, and graduation rates, as well as the quality of education provided by the schools. The Compact's strategy of building public accountability into the agreement by establishing measurable goals for all partners made it unique, easy to monitor, and enormously appealing.

Businesses quickly exceeded their goals for permanent and part-time job placements and continue to do so, but measurable change in schools was slow. The Boston business community was far more successful in carrying out its Compact agreement because it worked with several advantages that the school district lacked: participation incentives, the resources and know-how for meeting goals that were clear, and continuity in both leadership and program management.

Rochester-IBM Collaborative: A small, extremely effective collaboration takes place between IBM in Rochester, Minnesota, and the Rochester School District. In this model, teachers from the district spend "sabbatical" years working at IBM and developing new curriculum for the schools, as well as providing direct instruction to Rochester students, teachers, and IBM employees.

ACCESS: The Action Center for Educational Services and Scholarships (ACCESS) endowment provides graduating seniors with supplementary scholarship funds needed to complete the financial aid package required for college. By making the closing-the-gap or "last dollar" scholarship funds available--not only upon entry to college, but over a period of years--the program is designed to ensure that any qualified public school graduate in Boston who wishes to do so can go to college.

Scholarship in Escrow: Operating in Cleveland, this program provides financial incentives for students to maintain good grades in high school. Through an endowment provided by corporate and foundation donors, scholarship funds for postsecondary education are "banked" for students according to a point system in which dollar values are attached to each grade received. When a high school student graduates and enrolls in postsecondary education, he or she may withdraw the funds from his/her "escrow" account and use the money for tuition.

Strengths and Weaknesses: Collaboratives demonstrate many important strengths. They tend to increase public support for education by bringing the consumers of education (generally employers) directly into the educational

arena. They are funded almost entirely by outside resources, and, because they generally establish measurable goals at the outset, they are able to demonstrate their degrees of effectiveness. However, a major weakness of collaboratives is that there is very little expertise available on how to encourage, establish, and operate them successfully at this time. Another weakness, which can threaten the effectiveness and longevity of collaboratives between organizations, is that both organizations are collaborating on an activity that is peripheral to their core activities. Both interorganizational collaboratives and collaboratives directly with students are considered LOW in their amenability for implementation because the "other half" of any collaboration is beyond the control of the local district.

Amenability to Policy: Thus far, it has proven difficult for states to create a role in the collaborative arena. Although school organizations may be participants in interorganizational collaboratives, their role in them is outside the usual sphere of influence of state education agencies. Where the collaboration is directly between students and business people, there is no obvious role for the state. Thus, collaboratives are ranked as LOW in their amenability to state policy.

However, especially creative options for alteration of the state role exist in this type of program. States may consider offering incentives for postsecondary participation or promote promising models and offer incentives for adoption. A very interesting development in the state's role has taken place in Louisiana with the Taylor's Scholars program, which is described in Appendix B.

Program Type V: Indirect Services--Curriculum Development and Staff Development

In addition to those program initiatives that serve students directly, there is a group of initiatives that provide indirect services to the target group through staff development/teacher training and curriculum development. This program type meets the research goals of the project by attempting to improve the quality of instruction and thus better preparing students to succeed in postsecondary education. Among these are several initiatives that

help teachers improve their skills in the teaching of writing and critical thinking skills. The summary below illustrates services of this type. Appendix B contains other examples.

The EQ Project: In 1980, the College Board launched the Educational EQuality Project as a 10-year effort to strengthen the academic quality of secondary education and to ensure equal access to postsecondary education for all students. During the first three years of the project, more than 1,400 high school and college teachers worked to define explicitly what students need to know to succeed in college. These became the "basic academic competencies" and the "basic academic subjects" and appeared in Academic Preparation for College (1983). Between 1983 and 1986, more than half the states either used the book's objectives verbatim or formally cited them as the competencies that high school graduates should possess.

Six subject-matter books in the Academic Preparation Series (College Board, 1986) incorporate the "how" of instruction with the "what" to teach. These books serve as guides to prompt teachers to think and talk about curriculum and teaching methods, to alert teachers to the needs of middle-range students, and to teach them to value heterogeneity among students. Each book discusses the connections between preparation and learning outcomes, describes curricular content and goals, provides specific curricular examples for teacher use, links the subject matter with the basic academic competencies, and closes with an outline of issues for further discussion.

Among activities using these materials, the EQ project provided workshops to over 7,000 teachers, created (or nurtured) 17 high school-college collaboratives, and supported three statewide projects. Among the states in the SEIL region, EQ workshops have been held in Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina and to a lesser extent in Florida. Project 95 in Mississippi focuses on the academic "competencies" established by the EQ project and used them in their $500,000 teacher development training program this past summer.

Strengths and Weaknesses: The strength of these programs is based on their closeness to the core substance of education and the fact that they benefit all

students. They also are attractive to teachers and are thought to raise teacher morale. Since most districts either have, or can easily acquire, the resources to offer staff development and curriculum development, they are HIGH in their amenability to implementation from the local perspective. The major weaknesses of these indirect services are that they consume considerable staff time and other internal resources, and they are often ineffective, although effectiveness is very difficult to measure.

Amenability to Policy: The provision of indirect services is traditionally a major component of the state's role in education. They are considered HIGH in their amenability to state policy, although the ability of most states to provide them has recently been hampered by budget cuts. Thus, one option for alteration of policy is to support more local innovation in developing curriculum and training teachers. Another option is to increase flexibility in the training and credentialling of teachers.

The program types and key indicators of strengths and weaknesses appear in the Summary Table: Assessment of Program Types, provided at the end of this chapter. In addition to a brief review of the strengths and weaknesses of various program options, two assessments of implementation appear here. In the column titled "Amenability to State Policy," there is an assessment of the likelihood that the state can successfully set policy to bring about program implementation. In the column titled "Amenability to Local Implementation," there is the likelihood that a local school district/school can implement the program type with existing resources and expertise. Options for alteration in the state role are shown in the last column.

This summary table also is intended as a quick reference guide for policymakers. Using the two sets of assessments, it is possible to estimate the likelihood of program implementation at the local level. Where the assessments read HIGH in both columns, it may be assumed that the programs have a strong likelihood for implementation. However, likelihood for implementation is a pragmatic assessment and should not be confused with effectiveness. Thus, it is important to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of program types, as well as their implementability. Program types that are ranked LOW or MEDIUM by

criteria of implementability may have strengths that can offset their difficulty in implementation. In this case, it is particularly important for policymakers to consider the options for policy assistance that may facilitate a greater state role and enhance the ability of local districts to undertake such program types.

Summary Table: Assessment of Program Types

Initiative Type (Actors)	Strengths	Weaknesses	Amenability to State Policy	Amenability to Local Implementation	Policy Assistance Options
Alternative schooling programs (schools)	Offer comprehensive, visible, measurable outcomes; are core of education; have flexibility; infuse resources; are attractive to teachers; offer potential strong outcomes.	Consume many resources; require intense effort to implement.	High	Low	Increase exposure to innovative models; support school-based decision making; increase flexibility in operations.
School-based support services (schools)	Reach large numbers of students; target "whole person"; offer low-cost, potentially strong outcomes.	Offer low visibility; have limited intensity; make outcomes difficult to measure; consume internal resources.	High	High	Fund release time for teachers; redefine teacher-counselor roles.
Externally based support services (external entities, private sector, CBOs)	Reach large number of students, target "whole person"; infuse resources; widen student horizons; permeate school boundaries.	Have limited intensity; make outcomes difficult to measure.	Low	Medium	Adopt statewide program; offer incentives for postsecondary institutions to participate.
Collaboratives (private sector, school organizations, universities)	Infuse outside resources; increase public support of education; involve consumers of education; establish measurable outcomes.	Lack existing expertise.	Low	Low	Promote models; provide incentives for participation; add funding to business-student initiatives.
Indirect services (schools, school districts)	Benefit all students; enhance education core; are attractive to teachers; focus on academic readiness.	Offer limited intensity; consume internal resources; make outcomes difficult to measure.	High	High	Increase flexibility; support innovation.

This table displays five categories of programs and initiatives that serve the needs of average students, including an assessment of their strengths and weaknesses, and the likelihood that these types of programs can be implemented successfully either through local effort and/or with the guidance of state policy.

CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS

This report presents an array of policy roles and program types that can be considered to improve opportunities for middle-range high school students to improve high school graduation rates, postsecondary enrollment, and success in postsecondary education and capabilities for the work force. It was not the intention of the study to recommend any one best policy or program option, but rather to present a menu of options for consideration by policymakers. Thus, the two previous chapters and the summary tables represent the major findings of the study.

However, in addition to the array of options, the study generated conclusions in three areas:

- Further definition of the target group.
- An evolution in the traditional state roles, including changes in clients, partners, and strategies, as well as change in content.
- A broadening of involvement of organizations and individuals that are external to the traditional school system.

Further Definition of the Target Group

An important issue faced in this project was the need to define iteratively the nature and characteristics of the target group. As respondents were interviewed, they helped to develop a definition of what comprises middle-range students, as well as what serves the needs of these students. After overcoming their first reaction that "all education reform serves that group," many respondents indicated a recognition that greater efforts must be made to improve services to average students.

At the beginning of the study, the nominators were convinced that the target group was too broadly defined using only academic criteria and needed additional delimiting. At that point in the study, an emphasis was introduced on students who, in addition to achieving in the middle range, were economically disadvantaged and the first generation of their families to finish

high school and aspire to postsecondary education, those who are the "forgotten half" of the high school population.

The perception of focusing on forgotten students was reinforced in the process of reviewing the literature and conducting interviews in preparation for this final report. In The Shopping Mall High School (Powell, Farrar, and Cohen, 1985), the authors describe the awesome mindlessness of secondary schools. They refer to the vast range of options that are so broad and vague as to be virtually meaningless--and stress that the winners (among students) are those in specialized programs, much along the lines of the preferred customers in specialty shops. The "unspecial" students in the middle are ignored and poorly served.

Among the many educators and policymakers interviewed, the first response to the introduction of the study was remarks such as:

> Average students . . . we don't think they're broken so we don't try to fix them.
>
> They finish high school; that's what makes them average students.
>
> We don't have the time or the money to worry about them.

Yet, this forgotten and "unspecial" group of students contains fully half of the high school population (as defined by quartiles) and represents the group of workers whose productivity will determine our success as a nation in the world economic competition of the next century.

> An educated work force is considered crucial to higher productivity and adaptability to rapidly changing markets. Economic competition includes both highly technical personnel and the average worker who could once get by with repetitive manufacturing routines. For example, the Japanese are reputed to have the best bottom academic quartile in the world. (Kirst, 1988, p. 320)

This statement contributed to a realization that the fractions used in talking about Japanese students and those that we tend to use in referring to groups of U.S. students are different in an enlightening way. As students were

defined for this study, the tradition of dividing all students into three groups was followed: the gifted and talented, the at-risk, and the "average students." Thus, one-quarter of the students were placed at the top and one-quarter of the students at the bottom, but there is a failure to differentiate the middle (the average students) into similar quartiles--leaving a vast, undifferentiated middle that contains 50 percent of all students in schools.

The implication is that we are "missing" two quartiles in our efforts to target educational reforms. It appears that education policies and programs that take a "one-size-fits-all" approach may fail to pull out from the middle group those students who may have abilities close to those of the gifted and talented students (the top of the middle), as well as those at the other end, thus failing to meet the needs of students who border on the at-risk group.

As policymakers examine the Summary Table: Assessment of Program Types in Chapter III, they may wish to look at program types in terms of their suitability for the higher and lower ability groups that are included in the middle range. For example, externally based support services, which frequently bridge the gap between high school and college, may apply most appropriately to students in the higher ability group. Programs in the category "school-based support services" that are frequently based on models for at-risk students may, on the other hand, be more effective with the lower ability group within the middle range.

The Change in State Roles

According to study findings, the state role in supporting initiatives for middle-range students frequently involves an expansion of the state role beyond its traditional emphasis on regulation and compliance. Further, it involves a change beyond its emphasis on schools as clients and its focus on school improvement. Within the school improvement model, the state is moving towards an outcomes-based model, placing less reliance on mandates and directives.

Broadening Participation of Organizations Outside of the School System

Another finding of the study is related to the changing role of the states. A large and diverse range of organizations and individuals was observed to be

involved in efforts to serve middle-range students. At the program level, there are groups that include postsecondary institutions, large and small businesses, and nonprofit intermediary organizations. Thus, as states consider alterations in their policy roles, they may wish to consider promoting collaborations outside the educational system entirely--taking their cues from what is already taking place at the local level.

Programs in the category of collaboratives show a new trend--a proliferation of programs that involve a single wealthy person offering scholarships directly to students, generally in economically disadvantaged areas. These initiatives, referred to by one respondent as "Midas Touch Programs," seem to be spreading across the country, with the publicity for each spawning another. The availability of incentives/funding by private individuals for disadvantaged high school students is an option that policymakers may wish to study and perhaps facilitate through state action.

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APPENDIX A

FORMS AND INSTRUMENTS

Nomination Form

My name is_____, and I am conducting a study on behalf of the Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory. Your name was given to me by _____ at _____ as someone who might be able to provide some information for the study.

This study focuses on the middle-range high school student. In the midst of educational reform, what is being done to assist the average student in meeting the new academic standards and graduation requirements and in pursuing postsecondary education? (**Probe:** The average student refers to students in the 30th to 70th percentile, particularly those who are minority or "first-generation" going to college.) Specifically, we are talking about the effects of such new policies on:

- high school completion rates, and
- postsecondary enrollment and success.

We hope that you can assist us in finding policymakers who are especially well informed on:

- the content of specific state reforms in the area of academic achievement;
- policies such as new articulation initiatives that strengthen the linkage between secondary and postsecondary institutions;
- strategies (such as innovative program grants) that states are instituting to help meet the new standards.

We are also interested in talking to people who operate innovative programs that assist the average student to complete high school and enroll and succeed in postsecondary education. Some examples are:

- support services or academic tutoring programs to assist students to graduate;
- programs that raise students' aspirations to pursue college educations or meaningful careers;
- partnerships or collaboratives with private industry or postsecondary institutions that encourage college enrollments;
- special outreach services by colleges or universities to enroll such students;
- special support services to help students succeed in college.

Screening Instrument for Policies

My name is....., and I am conducting a study for the Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory. Your name was given to me by.....at..... as someone who might be able to contribute information to the study.

Our study focuses on the impact of recent educational reforms on average or middle-range students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. (**Probe:** We are defining the middle-range student as one in the 30th to 70th percentile.)

We are interested in such policies as:

- o increased graduation requirements.
- o new assessment standards.
- o changes in admissions requirements for state postsecondary institutions and the effect these have on the graduations rates of middle range students and their decision to enroll in postsecondary education.

We also are interested in strategies that are being used to help these students such as:

- o special incentive grants for innovative programs
- o outreach initiatives by colleges and universities
- o direct scholarships or financial aid to students

If we have the name of a specific policy or strategy: We believe that the (name of policy).....might be an appropriate one for inclusion in the study.

If we do not have a specific policy or strategy: Is the (name of state or agency) currently involved in such an initiative? If so, could you tell me about it or direct me to someone who could describe it to me?

At this point, if the initiative is not appropriate or you have the name of another person, thank the respondent for their time and terminate the interview. If the initiative does seem appropriate, continue with the following:

- o This seems to be a policy initiative that we would be very interested in. I would like to schedule an appointment for a longer interview with you to discuss it further. I can also send you a letter that describes our study in greater detail if that would be helpful for you.

- o The interview takes about one-half hour. We would like to schedule it during the month of August (If necessary, set a date for the last week in July or the first week of September).

Date and time of scheduled interview.....

Address to send letter if different from Cover Sheet

.....

.....

.....

Data Collection Instrument for Policies

(Interviewer: Make sure you have the cover sheet and the initial screening instrument. Before you call, review the information that has been provided in the screening interview.)

1. Please describe the policy for me briefly. (Use the description in the screening instrument to guide this discussion. Cover the following probes.)
   - o origin of the reform
   - o champions of the reform
   - o major goals
   - o content areas
   - o related policies that are important

2. Is this policy part of a major state reform package?
   If yes: discuss the
   - o background of the reform
   - o major goals of the reform
   - o content areas of the reform
   - o date of the reform
   - o formal name of the reform

3. What are the primary strategies for implementing the policy? (e.g., legislative mandate, altered regulations, incentives, accountability mechanisms)

4. What agencies or groups have primary responsibility for developing and implementing the policy strategies?

5. Are there specific programmatic strategies connected with this policy? (e.g., incentive grants for innovative programs, curriculum or program designs developed at the state level).
   If yes: Discuss in detail and find out names of key organizations, role groups and individuals involved. We particularly want names of people we can contact.

6. What mechanisms are in place to support these policy and/or programmatic strategies in terms of:
   - o funding
   - o governance
   - o materials
   - o technical assistance

7. What outcomes do you expect from these strategies? What are your criteria for success?

8. What assessment tools do you plan to use to judge the extent of success of the policy and/or programmatic strategies?

9. Has there been attention to the impact on the middle range or average student in the development and implementation of strategies and programs? (Probe for the following:)
   - o informal discussion
   - o workshops or papers addressing the issue
   - o special support mechanisms or other program tools.

10. In your opinion, what is (or will be) the impact of these policy strategies or programmatic strategies on the middle range student in terms of
    - o graduation rates
    - o plans/aspirations to attend college
    - o success in postsecondary education

11. What problems (if any) do you see in the implementation of these policy strategies that might negatively affect the likelihood that the average student will graduate from high school and enroll in postsecondary institutions?
    - o Probe for lack of appropriate programs, support services, or outreach initiatives by postsecondary institutions.

Screening Instrument for Programs

My name is....., and I am conducting a study for the Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory. Your name was given to me by.....as someone who might be able to contribute information to the study.

Our study focuses on the impact of recent educational reform efforts on average or middle-range students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. (**Probe:** We are defining the middle-range student as one in the 30th to 70th percentile.) We are interested in programs that seek to assist students to meet these standards. We are particularly interested in programs that aim to increase graduation rates and participation in postsecondary education.

We also are interested in programs that might have developed independent of recent reforms and changes but that serve the same purpose. Let me give you some examples of the types of programs that I am referring to:

- o support services or tutoring programs to assist high school students to graduate;
- o programs that raise students' aspirations to pursue postsecondary education or meaningful careers;
- o partnerships or collaboratives with private industry or postsecondary institutions that encourage college enrollments;
- o outreach programs by colleges and universities;
- o direct services by postsecondary institutions that increase students' chances of success such as remediation.

If we have the name of a specific program: We believe that the (name of program)..... may be an appropriate one for inclusion in the study. If so, could you tell me about it briefly or direct me to someone who could describe it to me.

At this point, if the program is not appropriate or you have the name of another person, thank the respondent for their time and terminate the interview.

If the program does seem appropriate, continue with the following:

This seems to be a program that we would be very interested in. I would like to schedule an appointment for a longer interview with you to discuss it further. I can also send you a letter that describes our study in greater detail if that would be helpful for you.

The interview takes about one-half hour. We would like to schedule it during the month of August. (If necessary, set a date for the last week in July or the first week of September).

Date and time of scheduled interview.....
Address to send letter if different from Cover Sheet.....
.....

Data Collection Instrument for Programs

(Interviewer: Make sure you have the cover sheet and the initial screening instrument for this program. Before you call, review the information that has been provided in the screening interview.)

1. Please describe the program for me. (Use the description in the screening instrument to guide this discussion as necessary).
   - o major goal.
   - o origin and champions of the program.
   - o related policies and programs that are important. (In the state, district, college, school, etc.).
   - o Confirm the type of program it is and how it works (in-school, collaborative, outreach, etc.).
   - o Who operates the program (school district, CBO, postsecondary institution, etc.)?
   - o What amount of time is involved for using this program (daily, one day a week, etc.)?
   - o What equipment and materials are used?

2. What is the primary target group for the program? (Probe for involvement of middle-range students even if that it not the first or primary target group mentioned).
   - o Who typically participates (academic range, minority status)?
   - o What type of students are most successful in the program?

3. Was this program developed to meet new state or local policy initiatives?
   <u>If yes</u>: Discuss the
   - o specific policy goal the program is designed for
   - o its relation to other program and policy strategies.

4. When did the program begin? What is your involvement in the program?

5. Where is the program currently being implemented (i.e., location and numbers)?

6. What resources (equipment, money, facilities, personnel) are necessary to operate this program?

7. What tools do you use to assess the success of the program?

8. What information do you have on the effectiveness of the program? (e.g., increase in enrollment, achievement, taking SATs/ACTs, graduation, applying to postsecondary institutions, going into university-based programs). How were data collected and how recent are they? Is it possible to access the data? From whom and in what form is it available?

9. Are there published materials available about the program? If so, where and from whom are these available?

10. Are you the appropriate contact person for others (policymakers, program operators) who might want to learn more about the program?

APPENDIX B

SUMMARIES OF ADDITIONAL PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Program Name: Project 2061

Program Location: National

Program Type: Indirect Service

Goals/Target Group: The purpose of this initiative is to set academic standards in the sciences for all elementary and secondary grade levels. The program is overseen by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, with major funding from the National Science Foundation.

Origin/Description: The project's first phase brought scientists together to discuss the major ideas. The second phase, just under way, has six centers (staffed by university and school people) independently working to convert the first-phase report ideas into blueprints (e.g., introduction and approach by grade level). This three-year effort will then be followed by a third five-year phase of curriculum development.

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Program Name: Combining Dean and Counselor Roles

Program Location: Thomas Carr Howe High School, Indianapolis, IN

Program Type: Indirect Service

Goals/Target Group: The intent of the initiative was to give more individual attention to students and to disperse responsibility for managing the student body.

Origin/Description: The principal adopted the idea from another school district in 1974. Two deans, previously responsible for discipline and attendance, and seven counselors, responsible for course selection, etc., now share both sets of responsibilities. Each individual is assigned one group of students to follow throughout the four years of high school. Although deans remain "administrators" and counselors, "teachers," they have the same student responsibilities. Higher-paid deans have extra assignments. For example, although all counselors/deans can suspend students, information on all such actions is compiled by the dean, who prepares the appropriate summary reports.

Program Name: Mentor Teacher Program

Program Location: San Jose, CA

Program Type: Indirect Service

Goals/Target Group: This program is intended to improve the quality of instruction among teachers in the district.

Origin/Description: The district implemented the Mentor Teacher Program in 1983 in conjunction with the teachers' association, based on other mentoring models established under a state-sponsored program. The district's director of instruction was instrumental in its establishment. The teachers' association suggested a needs assessment of all teachers in order to match the district's instructional needs with the proposals of Mentor Program applicants. A teacher-administrator selection committee was organized to review the needs assessment and select the first group of mentor teachers. A mentor teacher receives $4,000 and extra release time to carry out proposed activities. Mentor teachers work on projects that will be used district-wide, as well as ones that are school-based. Examples of mentor teacher activities are a science teacher-developed instructional packet on human biology to accompany a new textbook and the development of a model curriculum. Mentor teachers also assist other teachers in their own schools, as needed.

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Program Name: Vision

Program Location: South Division High School, Milwaukee, WI

Program Type: Indirect Service

Goals/Target Group: The entire curriculum is being gradually restructured to increase attendance, graduation rates, employability skills, and postsecondary education enrollments.

Origin/Description: Community leaders, parents, and community groups pressured the school board to make changes based on their concerns about low achievement, high dropout rate, and poor attendance. The resulting Vision program includes remediation, core programming, integration of arts and other studies into the curriculum, applied mathematics/science projects, assessments, flexible class time, additional supports, extracurricular activities, CAI, MIS, teacher training, tapping community resources, and continuing special programs. The program targets 1,900 racially diverse students: 40 percent Hispanic, 23 percent black, 22 percent white, 6 percent Southeast Asian, and 2 percent Native American. The program is beginning with grade nine and will phase in one grade at a time.

Program Name: Adopt-a-Student Program

Program Location: Lexington District 5, Columbia, SC

Program Type: School-Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: The purpose of the program is to help students feel that each is more a part of the school system and that someone cares about them personally. The students are chosen at random by the coordinator from a list of students given to her by teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, etc. Students are recommended if a faculty member feels they could benefit from the program.

Origin/Description: Teachers and administrators volunteer for the program. Students and teachers are matched up during times when they have commensurate free blocks. The teacher and student get together over lunch for a half-hour to an hour and talk. They frequently discuss college. Forty-seven teachers (1/3 of the faculty) volunteered for the program; 47 of 2,200 students in the school are able to participate.

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Program Name: Diversified Cooperative Work Experience

Program Location: Board Of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) at various locations in New York State

Program Type: School-Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: The primary target group is "overlooked high school students" who have no goals. The program provides students with entry-level job skills. They are motivated to stay in school because they see that higher education is a realistic option.

Origin/Description: The program began 13 years ago when New York State offered program options. The school year begins with a self-assessment. Students learn job-search strategies, how to prepare resumes, communication skills, good work habits, etc. They are shown options in the job market and are helped to match their skills with jobs in which they are interested. The second half of the year is spent learning money management and taking marriage and family and anti-drug abuse courses.

Program Name: Sophomore Seminar

Program Location: Chapel Hill High School, NC

Program Type: School-Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: Eighty students who are not achieving at their potentials are referred to the program by teachers, themselves, and/or by parents. The goal of the program is to improve student achievement as reflected in grades, attitude about school, and self-esteem.

Origin/Description: The board of education responded to a grass-roots concern about meeting the needs of all students effectively. Although a proposal to a foundation was not funded, the school district was so excited by the concept that it funded the program without special equipment and other costly plans. Smaller classes were formed using a team teaching approach. The curriculum was designed to meet state requirements through a cross-disciplinary approach. Extra counseling was provided. The program has 80 students with no expansion plans.

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Program Name: Assuring Success for All Students

Program Location: Anderson School District 1, Williamstown, SC

Program Type: School-Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: The program goals are to: improve the accuracy of the identification of at-risk students, increase the number of school contacts with the parents of at-risk students, reduce the number of school attendance days lost to out-of-school suspensions, reduce the number of students who fail subjects in the middle schools and secondary schools, reduce the number of students who repeat grades in the middle and secondary schools, reduce the number of actual dropouts, more accurately quantify and track the students who drop out, develop a process for providing accurate dropout information to the administrators, and disseminate to area education agencies the strategies and findings of the project.

Origin/Description: The Assuring Success project is a multicomponent dropout prevention project consisting of the following: identification of at-risk students at all grade levels; intense, individual counseling for at-risk students; teacher awareness and involvement; tutoring; specialized instruction/The New Model Me Curriculum; parent involvement and training; student incentive program; alternative discipline/in-school suspension; accounting, tracking, and follow-up of dropouts; reentry counseling and assistance; and community awareness.

Program Name: Project Success

Program Location: Prince Georges County, MD

Program Type: School-Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: The program works with students in six of the county's 20 schools who have been retained in a grade or score one year below grade level on CATs and who exhibit discipline, attendance, and self-esteem problems. The program is an incubator for strategies for the rest of the district to improve academic achievement and graduation rates and to prepare students for postsecondary education or jobs.

Origin/Description: This program is an outgrowth of Project Stay, which started five years ago. It operates under Maryland's Tomorrow initiatives. Project Success offers career awareness, shadowing, and activities to raise self-esteem. A school coordinator provides outreach, and a mentor deals with counseling, crisis management, and advocacy. The project designers are planning to intensify efforts to obtain business support and offer teacher training in the current school year.

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Program Name: Project Teach 1988-89

Program Location: North Carolina

Program Type: School-Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: This program is a special effort designed by the Public School Forum of North Carolina in 1987 to recruit talented minority youth into the Teaching Fellows Scholarship Program and the field of teaching. It was funded for school year 1987-88 by the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Origin/Description: The premise of the program was to provide minority parents and students with information about college entrance and teaching as a career, in addition to the information provided by the school system. The strategy was much like a "Get Out The Vote" campaign. Using a core list of students identified by the school system personnel per GPA, course completion, and SAT scores, the community-based team members were assigned families to work with. Personal contact was a keystone of the project. As provided in 1987-88, Project Teach sponsored free SAT and Interview Skills Preparation Workshops in each of the 11 participating school systems.

Program Name: Tri-Star

Program Location: South Carolina (Planned)

Program Type: School-Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: The state believes that a commitment to alert young people in South Carolina to their need for college-level training must begin as early as the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. The program focuses on these three grades because they are crucial in the development of individuals' attitudes about themselves, their abilities, and their future careers.

Origin/Description: A commission appointed by the state proposed an early intervention program in South Carolina to address a commitment to the potential of the state's youth. The proposed Tri-Star program would enable young people who might not otherwise be aware of higher education opportunities to become knowledgeable about them and to commit themselves early to pursue those opportunities. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) will soon go out to pilot sites. The state hopes to give grants ($165,000) to schools for three years.

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Program Name: The Bridge Program

Program Location: Georgia State University

Program Type: Externally Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: The program is designed to assist black students who have been admitted to the university's developmental studies program. The intent is to orient students to the university and its library and to bond students to a group before they begin their freshman year of college. The program is reportedly most successful with students of traditional college age -- 18- or 19-year-olds. Approximately 50 students participate each year.

Origin/Description: The program is a four-week summer enrichment experience. Half the day is spent on campus studying noncredit mathematics enrichment and language enrichment courses. The other half day is spent at part-time jobs secured by the university through the cooperation of local employers. The program began about five years ago as part of the state's desegregation initiative.

Program Name: Mathematics Science Education Network PreCollege Program (MSEN)

Program Location: Six MSEN Network Center sites in NC state universities

Program Type: Externally Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: The MSEN program is designed to increase the number of minorities and females who pursue postsecondary education and careers in mathematics/science fields by providing academic enrichments to students in grades 6-12 who express interest or show potential. In 1989-90, 69 schools participated; this is projected to increase to 77 in 1994-95. The number of student participants in the same years are 2,224 to 2,982 (predicted).

Origin/Description: As a result of studies revealing underrepresentation of females and minorities in mathematics/science courses, in 1986-87 Vinetta Jones and Verna Allen of the Mathematics/Science Education Network developed the MSEN PreCollege Program using MESA (CA) and other programs as models, with funding from the Carnegie Corporation. The program is under the direction of a team of teachers with a mathematics/science teacher as lead and an academic adviser/team. There are many activities within the program: junior high academic enrichment classes offered daily, and less frequently in high schools; student clubs on school sites; five-week Summer Scholars Program on university campuses; Saturday Academies held 12-20 times in an academic year on university campuses; administration of CTBS tests; parental involvement; academic, college, and career advising; mathematics/science competitions; recognition awards programs; precollege days; and teacher in-service training.

The North Carolina General Assembly is providing funding for the program, which is being conducted by the UNC MSEN at each of six UNC sites. The funds provide MSEN staff and a university faculty sponsor who work with designated junior/senior high school teachers and a MSEN precollege advisory committee. The committee is composed of representatives of local schools, universities, businesses, professional, minority, parent, and community organizations.

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Program Name: Seniors Select

Program Location: Harper High School and Georgia State University

Program Type: Externally Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: The goal of the program is to help students graduate from high school and go on to college or some postsecondary endeavor, not necessarily Georgia State. The program targets any student who has not indicated a desire for college until the junior year, but whose PSAT or SAT scores indicate a potential for college.

Origin/Description: The program was born out of discussions between the Georgia State Developmental Studies Division and the Central Office of Public Schools in 1983. Thirty-five students were served last year, all of whom graduated.

Program Name: Ohio Early College Math Placement Testing Program (EMPT)

Program Location: Ohio High Schools

Program Type: Externally Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: This program serves all high school juniors in Ohio who have not yet decided to enter college. It is aimed at average and above average students. The goal is to bring mathematics scores up to college level.

Origin/Description: Ohio State University started the program in 1983 as an outreach to improve the calibre of entering students. Dissatisfaction of legislators and the Board of Regents with college mathematics performance was the catalyst. EMPT is a voluntary mathematics testing program for all high school juniors in Ohio who intend to or have not yet decided to enroll in college. Tests and personalized reports alert students to the courses they should take in their senior year to bring them up to college-level mathematics. There is a "Transition to College Mathematics" course for students scoring at the remedial level on the test.

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Program Name: PRISM (Rochester)

Program Location: Rochester, NY

Program Type: Externally Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: The program is intended to recruit minorities into science and mathematics careers. The practice provides tutoring, college and career preparation, and enrichment activities to minority students in grades 9-12 throughout the Rochester City Schools. Eighth-grade students must score in the 50th percentile on a standardized achievement test at the end of the eighth grade to enter the program and must maintain a "C" average to remain in the program.

Origin/Description: Teams of students, under the leadership of a teacher or "coach," meet twice a month for two hours. "Pros" or minority representatives from industry tutor students at sessions. Four times a year, students in each grade level tour local industry sites. This program has resulted in an increase in student participation in mathematics- and science-related activities, as well as an increase in student enrollments in mathematics and science courses after high school.

Program Name: PRIME

Program Location: Philadelphia, PA

Program Type: Externally Based Support Service

Goals/Target Group: A nonprofit organization dedicated to creating opportunities for minorities in engineering, pharmacy, and other mathematics and science-based professions, PRIME is open to all qualified students within the Philadelphia and Camden School Districts. Various junior/middle and senior high schools within these districts have been designated as PRIME schools. Special efforts to identify and recruit capable students, particularly minorities and women, are undertaken in these schools. Within each PRIME school, particular teachers and counselors are designated as PRIME Coordinators. Working in conjunction with PRIME staff members, they counsel, monitor, and provide specialized instruction and activities to PRIME students.

Origin/Description: PRIME was founded in 1973 as a result of discussions between General Electric and the Philadelphia School District. It was conceived as a way of increasing the number of minorities and women graduating from college in engineering and finding employment in engineering professions. Incorporated in 1975, PRIME was originally an acronym for Philadelphia Regional Introduction for Minorities to Engineering. Basically, PRIME is a precollege program that begins in seventh grade and provides capable minority students with five years of specialized and supplementary activities in mathematics, science, and communications.

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Program Name: Project Choice

Program Location: Kansas City, MO

Program Type: Collaborative

Goals/Target Group: High school students who meet the following criteria are served. They must attend school regularly, perform well academically as defined in the Project Choice agreement, avoid drugs and alcohol, avoid parenthood, graduate from high school, and complete other requirements outlined in the Project Choice agreement.

Origin/Description: Project Choice is a program funded by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, which was created in the mid-1960s by Ewing M. Kauffman, co-owner of the Kansas City Royals baseball team. The essence of Project Choice is that the Foundation agrees to pay various expenses for qualified students at a vocational or technical school in the Kansas City area, a college in the student's resident state, or, at the Foundation's option, another institution of higher education. Paid expenses include tuition, fees, books, and reasonable room and board, if applicable. Parent involvement is a key component of Project Choice.

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Program Name: PATHS/PRISM (Philadelphia Alliance for Teaching Humanities in the Schools/Philadelphia Renaissance in Science and Mathematics)

Program Location: Philadelphia, PA

Program Type: Collaborative

Goals/Target Group: The Committee to Support the Philadelphia Public Schools (CSPPS) was established in 1983 to help stimulate and coordinate private sector cooperation with the district in order to improve public education. One goal is to assist teachers in improving the effectiveness of instruction in the humanities, mathematics, and science. Another goal is to improve curriculum in cooperation with the private sector, colleges, universities, and other related institutions. PRISM has a further goal of improving minority achievement in mathematics and science. The structure is designed to give teachers a strong role in the planning and implementation of the programs.

Origin/Description: The programs include achievement awards, grants for teachers and schools, interdisciplinary programming, the development and distribution of science kits, teacher training, staff development programs, student-based programs and consulting services, and technical assistance. About 8,000-12,000 teachers, as well as administrators, have participated in these programs. PATHS and PRISM operate under separate directors reporting to an executive director who, in turn, reports to a board comprised of senior management from the private sector, universities, school districts, teachers' union, universities, and cultural institutions. The program manages a $5 million budget supported by the private sector, various foundations, the school district, and the federal government.

Program Name: Mississippi Pilot Program

Program Location: Several sites in Mississippi

Program Type: Collaborative

Goals/Target Group: This program targets students who are considering college but are overwhelmed by the applications and forms that are involved. The students are generally poor and first-generation college students.

Origin/Description: The state is beginning this program to facilitate the application process to state colleges and universities. The program uses the H. R. Block income tax model. Volunteer financial aid specialists from the admissions offices will be on-site on a Saturday and a Sunday afternoon in poor communities and will have available all the appropriate admission forms, including housing and financial aid forms. Through radio and newspaper advertising and through the local churches, students and their parents will be advised about what papers they need to bring with them to fill out the applications. Then, working together, the specialists and the families will complete the application process.

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Program Name: Taylor's Scholars

Program Location: Louisiana

Program Type: Collaborative

Goals/Target Group: The goal of this initiative is to expand the services provided through "Taylor's Kids" to a statewide endeavor assuring that no student qualified to go to college will be denied the opportunity due to lack of funds.

Origin/Description: In 1988, Patrick Taylor, founder and president of Taylor Energy Company, promised at-risk 7th and 8th graders at a middle school in New Orleans that, if they stayed in school, graduated with the right courses, stayed out of trouble, and maintained a "B" average, he would see to it that they went to college. Based on the success of that program, Taylor promoted his idea at the state level. Based on a gubernatorial advisory group's report that the Taylor plan showed promise of success, the Taylor Plan Bill was introduced in the Louisiana legislature's spring 1989 session. The bill was passed and signed into law on July 10 as Act 789. The act sets admissions standards of at least an 18 ACT score, a minimum 2.5 GPA, and completion of 17 and 1/2 credits of college-preparatory courses. The act then waives tuition and fees for qualified students from low- and middle-income families.

Program Name: University of Georgia Program for School Improvement

Program Location: Athens, GA

Program Type: Collaborative

Goals/Target Group:- This university-public school partnership is based on the assumption that in order for local schools to be called "professional," the individual schools need to be the initiators and implementors of school-wide instructional improvement. Presently, public schools within a radius of 40 miles of the University of Georgia are eligible. Only a few schools can be selected.

Origin/Description: In such "professional" schools, decisions are made by all members of the professional staff based on their knowledge about the needs of students, community expectation, moral considerations concerning the educational programs, and the products and methods of research. These schools earn and sustain the designation "professional" as the members of the professional staff assume responsibility for their school's instructional program and accept accountability for their collective actions through systematic evaluation. Such "professional" schools become demonstration sites for both current and prospective teachers, administrators, and members of the professional staff as they prepare their schools for the future. Oglethorpe High School (Oglethorpe County, GA) began work in 1983 with the University of Georgia in developing a participatory decision-making process coordinated by the school's executive council, which is chaired and cochaired by teachers. The College of Education of the University of Georgia provides faculty to assist selected schools to become "professional" schools. University personnel assist the school faculty in developing school-wide decision-making procedures; establishing action research groups; assisting in collecting and analyzing data about students, teachers, and the community; and providing resources for staff development programs to accomplish the school's instructional goals. The college makes a commitment to assist the school for a period of two or more years in accomplishing its own priorities.

Program Name: Project DEEP (Diversified Educational Experiences Program)

Program Location: Freedman Central School, Graniteville, SC

Program Type: Alternative Schooling Program

Goals/Target Group: This program is targeted to at-risk middle and high school students but also enrolls many students of average academic ability. The goals of the program are to: humanize the classroom; teach students to learn to cope with established systems that operate in society; provide for individual differences; enable group cooperation and interaction; develop the skills of collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing data; offer experiences in decision-making and organizational skills; and develop responsibility for personal actions.

Origin/Description: The initiative came from the school district superintendent and is part of South Carolina's Target 2000 educational reform initiative. There is a student-centered approach to learning and classroom management. The use of media is encouraged, and most learning involves group or individual projects and presentations. The academic curriculum includes all subjects required for graduation and a variety of elective courses designed to enhance the students' psychological development and social skills. All students are working toward a state high school diploma. Students are encouraged to develop vocational skills, as well as academic and social skills. Middle school students all participate in career awareness classes. High school students may choose vocational classes at the Aiken County Career Center or career exploration and marketing classes at Freedman Central.

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Program Name: School Within a School

Program Location: Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District, NC

Program Type: Alternative Schooling Program

Goals/Target Group: This program targets high school seniors who have grades averaging "B" to "D," but who are thought to have greater potential. Students sign up for the program but are then screened to make sure their record is free of behavior problems. About 80 seniors are being served.

Origin/Description: The program offers a curriculum in English, world history, environmental science, and mathematics. These classes are scheduled from second through fifth periods. During first and sixth periods, students take electives. Integrated into their classes are a variety of topics that will help them with career goals. The approach to teaching is one of problem solving, described as a middle school team teaching approach applied to high school students.

Program Name: None

Program Location: District 50, Greenwood, SC

Program Type: Alternative Schooling Program

Goals/Target Group: This is a program designed to serve 65 9th- and 10th-grade students who are disadvantaged and in the middle or low range academically ("forgotten kids"). They have few behavioral problems but are low achievers. These are students who have the ability to be successful in learning but need individual attention. The goals of the program are to:

- o Improve the student's educational and basic learning skills.
- o Engage students in a program that will develop a more positive self-image.
- o Involve students in career and vocational exploration.
- o Reduce truancy and delinquency among those students enrolled.
- o Counsel each student toward a successful placement in the home school, vocational school, or full-time employment.
- o Provide instructional opportunities for high school graduation when returning to the home school, the GED, and/or job readiness skills.

Origin/Description: This program came about due to the interest of the district superintendent in dropout prevention. The school curriculum addresses three areas of student development: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Academic areas include English, reading, mathematics, social studies, science, music, and physical education. Students may earn a total of six Carnegie Units in an academic year. In addition to the academic emphasis, the students engage in social skill development activities and individual and small-group counseling programs.

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Program Name: Unique Placement

Program Location: Southern Adirondack Educational Center, New York State

Program Type: Alternative Schooling Program

Goals/Target Group: The goal of this program is to assist students in finding meaningful careers or applying to college. It is for average students who are floundering and have no support from home.

Origin/Description: The program originated with a teacher's idea. It is a high school internship. The program provides job placement for seniors thinking of going on to postsecondary education or who desire training in a unique occupation that is not presently offered as part of the vocational curriculum. Students spend 12-15 hours a week in a full or half-year internship.

Program Name: Philadelphia High School Academies, Inc.

Program Location: Philadelphia, PA

Program Type: Alternative Schooling Program

Goals/Target Group: The program works cooperatively with local business, industry, and labor within public schools to prepare students for employment and postsecondary education. It targets students whose low academic skills, poor attendance, etc., would not ordinarily qualify them for vocational education.

Origin/Description: In response to civil unrest, minority unemployment statistics, and high dropout rates, the Philadelphia Urban Coalition in 1969 fostered cooperation between the school district and the business community. The resulting program integrates vocational and academic skills training through team teaching in small classes. The program also features: flexible block rostering, limited and vocationally relevant course selection, career education, provision for jobs, increased counseling, and role modeling.

The Academies Program is currently serving as a model for the restructuring process in the Philadelphia high schools. The Academies are governed by a board of directors representative of district, labor, business, and community at the chief executive officer and senior management level. Each Academy is managed by a board of governors representing business, labor, universities, and community at middle- and upper-level management.

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Program Name: None

Program Location: West Hills High School, CA

Program Type: Alternative Schooling Program

Goals/Target Group: The program equips students with higher-level thinking skills in order to increase college enrollments.

Origin/Description: California passed the California Curriculum Standards in 1983. Jane Schaffer, chair of the English department, then took a year off to research programs and methodologies to respond to the standards through curriculum modifications in this new high school. The program stresses writing and classical core reading, taking into consideration that different students require different approaches but that all are capable of learning. The program has added a grade each year and now involves five teachers. In-service training for teachers has been intensified, including urging teachers to encourage college enrollment as a viable option for more students. The first class with total exposure to the program will graduate in 1991.

Program Name: North Carolina Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning (REAL) Enterprises

Program Location: Chapel Hill, NC

Program Type: Alternative Schooling Program

Goals/Target Group: This is a rural school-incubated enterprise program with open enrollment for students who have an interest in operating a business. The purposes are to increase achievement through experiential learning, to help students start a business while still in school that can be continued after graduation, and to encourage economic development in communities. The program was conceived by Jonathan Sher as a way to meet concerns about educational reform and economic development in rural areas. The planning took three years and was funded by foundations and with a small state contribution. Students meet requirements by taking courses under the vocational education (economics) curriculum, which include small business management and experiential research in how to own/operate businesses. The program is classroom-based.

Origin/Description: Funded by foundations and the state, North Carolina REAL Enterprises is a nonprofit organization that works through the state vocational education program. It also provides teacher training assistance and informal student guidance. Currently, there are nine pilot sites around North Carolina with companion sites in South Carolina and Georgia. The experimental phase is complete, and evaluation is being conducted. A planning phase (two years) will now take place in the state, with an emphasis on expanding the program statewide beginning in rural areas.

APPENDIX C

STATE SUMMARIES

ALABAMA

Status of Educational Reform and Current Educational Issues

Some of the background factors that condition the status of educational reform in Alabama include major barriers to implementation. Alabama has one of the two lowest per-pupil expenditures in education in the country. While education receives 87 cents of every tax dollar, the tax base is very low, and over 90 percent of the state education budget is spent for teachers' salaries.

This state is dealing with basic issues. For example, through a resolution of the state board, passed in 1988, school accreditation (either by the state or the southern accrediting association) is no longer optional. Schools have three years to become accredited.

Also, at the state level, education is a highly politicized issue. A State Plan for Excellence was adopted in 1984, involving task forces from around the state comprised of two to three thousand people. The plan was never fully funded. More recently, the governor has tried to put in strong accountability measures, but these have not been passed by the legislature.

Rather, the state board adopted 20 accountability resolutions, including development of the following:

- o A performance-based accreditation system.
- o Comprehensive local needs assessment.
- o Annual status reports comparing districts with each other.
- o Alternative school programs for at-risk students (not funded).

One possible use of the new accountability provisions is to tie them to the encouragement of local reforms by reducing state regulations if certain outcome conditions are met. Another possible use is to enhance the analytic and technical assistance capabilities of state agencies. The state has published a number of descriptive reports, and education groups are using the state data.

Policies and Programs for Middle-Range Students

The state board of education governs the K-12 system, and there is a separate state board for community colleges and technical institutes. Because each four-year college also has its own board, there is no unifying state board with overall influence to facilitate interorganizational collaboration. While there may be some articulation between community colleges and technical institutes and the K-12 system, there is none with higher education.

The majority of the provisions of the 20 accountability resolutions affect middle-range students only indirectly--such as the provision to improve writing skills. In response to the State Plan for Excellence, which calls for the teaching of creative and critical thinking skills to all students (not just gifted and talented), a program called "Talents Unlimited" has been implemented in Vestavia Hills, Alabama. This program appears beneficial to middle-range students; early evaluation results indicate that the integration of thinking skills into the curriculum by middle and high school teachers resulted in better student performance.

FLORIDA

Status of Educational Reform and Current Educational Issues

Education is one of the most important public policy issues in Florida. Concern about the quality of education has been accompanied by rapid and continuing population growth, which is putting a strain on the state's resources, including schools. In order to improve public education, Florida embarked on a series of educational reforms beginning in the early 1970s. In 1973, to distribute education funds more equitably across the districts, Florida passed the Florida Education Finance Program, which focused on the special needs of the students. In 1974, the state passed the Educational Accountability Act, which emphasized testing and evaluation. A series of laws were passed emphasizing minimum competencies for teachers and students. In 1978, the state began to administer the State Student Assessment Test.

Continued concern about local control of education led to the current era of educational reform that began in 1983 with the passage of a comprehensive reform package increasing state control over education. A major emphasis was on improving high schools. RAISE (Raise Achievement in Secondary Education) mandated statewide standards for high school graduation, including increasing the number of credits needed for graduation, setting a 1.5 grade point requirement for graduation (delayed implementation), and mandating a seventh period called the Extended Day (later shifted from mandates to incentives). The package also supported a Master Teacher Program, which provided bonuses to exceptional teachers, and mandated the use of state curriculum frameworks.

There were no statewide requirements or designated course requirements before 1983. In 1984, the state passed the Omnibus Education Act. The Merit Schools Program replaced the merit pay program. The Merit Schools Program provides stipends to all staff for a school's improvement and achievement.

More recently, the state has reemphasized local control with the aid of state incentives. One example of this has been support for school-based management. There has also been a shift of emphasis to early childhood education.

Policies and Programs That Assist Middle-Range High School Students

Most of Florida's general, nontargeted focus on secondary school improvement has benefited middle-range students. However, the more targeted foci are geared to both ends of the scale (e.g., dropout prevention or programs for the gifted),rather than the middle range. Dropout prevention is a major focus because of the state's low graduation rate.

Among the initiatives that are under way that indirectly assist middle-range students include: 1) an increased emphasis on counseling through teachers as advisors, 2) a mathematics/science initiative providing substantial sums of money for laboratories in high schools and encouraging students to enroll in higher level mathematics and science courses, 3) a planned postsecondary scholarship program for vocational students, and 4) a gold seal diploma modeled after the undergraduate scholars program. Alternative programs funded under dropout prevention legislation include features that benefit middle-range students, such as smaller classes, flexible scheduling, and special programs.

Some outreach programs are currently in place in the state's higher education institutions. These identify minority students in high schools, provide orientation and SAT training, and offer other assistance. Articulation agreements also facilitate enrollment in postsecondary institutions.

GEORGIA

Status of Educational Reform and Current Educational Issues

Education is still a priority issue in the Georgia Legislature. The 1984 statewide reform act, Quality Based Education (QBE), continues to be implemented. The act was never intended to be static, and its ongoing implementation is considered by some policymakers to be one of its major strengths. As of 1989, there are 14 QBE programs that have not been implemented, and full funding for these remains problematic.

Among the political conditions in the state that will affect the implementation of reform is the defeat of a proposed constitutional amendment to change from an elected state superintendent to an appointed superintendent of education. Given the defeat of that measure, numerous local plans to make the same change have been suspended on the assumption that they, too, would be defeated. Reformers had hoped that a movement to appoint superintendents in the state would assist in upgrading the professionalism of education.

Meanwhile, the state board adopted the Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) provisions of the act in 1988. Because there was not enough time to implement the QCC locally in the 1988-89 school year, the major thrust of implementation will be in the 1989-90 school year. There are several steps to the QCC at the local level. First, the local school board must adopt the QCC as the basis for local curriculum. Second, it must write a local curriculum guide to conform to the objectives, which should take at least a year. Third, it must review available resources to make sure they are supplying teachers with what they need in order to teach the QCC objectives. Fourth, the state is developing resource guides that will include model lessons demonstrating a variety of strategies and ways to convey the objectives of QCC. And last, full implementation of the QCC will take place in the local systems' textbook adoption year.

Another key Georgia issue is the shortage of teachers and the need to recruit minority teachers in far greater numbers. It is estimated that by the year 2000, Georgia will need a 55 percent minority teaching force because the

minority population is increasing, and the number of minority teachers is decreasing. Thus, the state is considering the establishment of an alternative route to certification for certain critical teaching fields, which are currently identified as science, mathematics, and foreign language. The plan would allow an applicant in these fields to complete the requirements for a nonrenewable certificate within one year.

Policies and Programs That Assist Middle-Range Students

Many model programs to help districts meet the provisions of the QCC have already been funded through their pilot years, and others are under way. The state is using a dissemination process similar to that in the National Diffusion Network to encourage districts to choose, from among the model programs, those that meet their local needs.

One such program is the Link Program that operates in Albany, Georgia, and has been funded as an innovative model by the state for three years. The program serves all students in the middle grades in a combined program of social studies and mathematics. The program's development was based on a locally perceived need to make a connection between the concrete types of learning that take place in the elementary schools and the need for abstract thinking at the high school level. Link has reportedly increased student achievement significantly, especially for average students.

The program developers, district teachers, and specialists have been funded to develop lessons, materials, and tests to codify the program, which they are demonstrating to other districts. Districts that wish to implement the Link Program will receive state funds as an incentive.

MISSISSIPPI

The Status of Educational Reform and Current Educational Issues

The capacity of Mississippi to design and carry out educational reform is strongly influenced by a variety of economic and environmental conditions. The following list illustrates some of those conditions that hamper reform efforts.

- Mississippi has one of the lowest per-pupil expenditures in the country.
- Mississippi is a rural state; therefore, its capacity to attract mathematics, science, and foreign language teachers is a major issue in upgrading the quality of education.
- Compulsory education was passed for the first time with the educational reform legislation of 1982. Compulsory school attendance is being phased in and has currently reached grade 10 or 11. A functional literacy test as a prerequisite to high school graduation was passed at the same time, but there is no funding for compensatory education yet.
- Deteriorating school buildings and the absence of air conditioning make it difficult to implement reforms that involve an extended school year.

Currently, the governor's initiative for a second educational reform package is a major concern in the state. Scheduled for legislative review in January 1990, this initiative is being called an accountability package, but its intent is apparently to encourage school-based change by providing increased flexibility at the local level.

The primary concept is to lift state restrictions and give greater autonomy to personnel in school districts that are excelling on the basis of test scores for each quartile of students--especially those in the bottom two quartiles. The initiative appears to be focused on early education and includes lifting some state regulations from elementary grades, such as age of enrollment, concept of structured school year, and repeating a semester, rather than a year.

Policies and Programs for Middle-Range Students

The lifting of state restrictions on school districts that are performing well may benefit the target group, although the initiative is apparently geared toward the elementary grades. Another indirect policy that targets average students is that the state now allows personnel to teach special courses, such as computer education and mathematics, before they are certified. This is intended to help meet the need for teachers in these subject areas.

Increased college admissions requirements in mathematics, science, and foreign language have prompted some districts to consolidate because they cannot offer what the admissions requirements demand. This consolidation affects all students and may be interpreted as a state mechanism for improving the quality of education by consolidating poor and ill-equipped school districts and thus strengthening them.

Two programs in Mississippi seem particularly relevant to the target group. Project 95 is an academic competencies initiative that is primarily privately funded. The goal of Project 95 is to improve linkages between the public schools and four-year institutions in the state. This follows actions by the state in 1982 to raise college admissions requirements with the possibility that additional new requirements in foreign language and computer literacy also will be added.

Project 95 is primarily aimed at enhancing the content of high school instruction so that students arrive at college better able to succeed. It is an example of the state working through the postsecondary system to bring about change at lower instructional levels.

The 2+2 Program is another initiative that may affect the target group. The program usually operates in the area of electronics or diversified technology and consists of linkages and articulation agreements between high schools and two-year postsecondary institutions. This is a recent effort, but one that the state considers to be of major importance.

NORTH CAROLINA

Status of Educational Reform and Current Educational Issues

There are two global educational reform initiatives in North Carolina: one has been in effect since 1985, and one has been enacted recently. The first and main thrust in educational reform is the Basic Education Plan (BEP), which was enacted to reduce inequity in the resources and quality of education across the school districts in the state.

BEP is currently in the fifth year of an $8 billion program that sets out provisions for all students in the areas of graduation requirements, course requirements, and improved curriculum standards; it also provides support services. The goal of BEP is to provide every child in North Carolina with an equal educational opportunity. Among the supports that are provided is the addition of guidance counselors and other personnel in poorer districts, adding over 15,000 people who work directly with children. The emphasis is on equity, rather than targeting specific groups, except for special needs students.

A more recent approach to state involvement in education is provided in the School Improvement and Accountability Act of 1989, also known as Senate Bill 2. This approach shifts responsibility to local districts to design and implement outcomes-based plans with a strong focus on student attainment, including postsecondary enrollment. This legislation puts more accountability at the local level. It is an incentive program, whereby achievement of objectives at the local level results in increased flexibility of budget and extra funds. There is a special focus on remediation. Participation is voluntary.

Other initiatives that are under way or being considered include a focus on curriculum issues such as higher-order thinking skills in order to improve student performance on SATs. Prevention of drug abuse is also a high profile issue.

Policies and Programs That Assist Middle-Range Students

Targeted programs in North Carolina, as in most states, are geared to handicapped, at-risk, or gifted students, not to middle-range students, although there are a number of ongoing efforts that directly or indirectly benefit this group. Foremost among these is the new focus of Senate Bill 2 emphasizing district initiatives to increase attendance, graduation rates, and postsecondary enrollment.

Operating out of the state office of teacher recruitment, and in cooperation with outside groups, are programs to encourage black students and their parents to enroll in college-preparatory courses in high school and to consider teaching careers (e.g., Project Teach). The state also is providing information to counselors about the availability of scholarship assistance for postsecondary education.

A major issue in the state university system, the domain of the state board of education, is the need for remediation. The university system is devising plans to determine who is receiving remediation and to provide feedback to the school district where the students graduated from high school. This may result in increased local efforts to assist students in preparing adequately for postsecondary education.

Among small and special programs that benefit middle-range students directly is one that helps students start small businesses under the auspices of vocational education. The REAL program is described in Appendix B.

Other efforts that indirectly benefit students include staff development programs in mathematics and science and in writing. The goals are primarily to increase instructional ability. These areas of improvement are expected to assist students in increasing their academic readiness for postsecondary education.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Status of Educational Reform and Current Educational Issues

The sweeping Educational Improvement Act (EIA) was expanded and augmented in 1989 by "Target 2000: Education Reform for the Next Decade" in South Carolina. The new legislation was prompted by concerns that the provisions of EIA did not adequately prepare students for the complexities of employment in the 21st Century. For that reason, Target 2000 contains several initiatives for emphasizing the teaching and learning of higher-order thinking skills. Among the initiatives are college training for teachers and administrators, in-service training, and evaluation of prospective and continuing teachers' abilities to teach the skills. The provisions also call for including items in the state testing programs that measure students' higher-order thinking skills.

Also targeted by new legislation are parents of young children who are considered at risk of becoming dropouts. Restructuring and the provision of increased flexibility for schools at the local level are also features of Target 2000. Concerning flexibility, the legislation states that once a school meets certain standards of performance, it is allowed flexibility in receiving exemptions from specified state regulations and reporting requirements.

Innovation grants available from the state may be used to design comprehensive approaches for improving student development, performance, and attendance. Up to $5,000 is available for planning, with an additional $90,000 available for implementation over a three-year period.

At the same time, some EIA programs were expanded, including early childhood education and remedial programs. The monitoring and accountability provisions of EIA also were extended.

Policies and Programs That Assist Middle-Range Students

Among the initiatives in South Carolina are many that indirectly affect the needs of middle-range students. For example, the new higher-order

thinking skills initiatives provide extensive indirect services in the realms of staff development and curriculum development. Another notable staff development effort is the Center of Advancement of Teaching and School Leadership. This program brings together teams of teachers and principals to design and implement innovative programs. The Center will be established at a selected college or university to provide intensive short-term institutes for school change.

South Carolina is also moving in the direction of increasing outreach to the private sector in a variety of its expanded EIA provisions. For example, a Leadership Network of representatives from the private sector will be appointed to promote business education partnerships in the state. Also, EIA consolidates the citizens' committees that monitored the original act into a single B-E Subcommittee and continues its involvement through Target 2000.

There are two components of Target 2000 that were cited as particularly advantageous to middle-range students. One is Arts Education, a discipline-based arts curriculum, which is now in the pilot program stage. This curriculum may prove attractive to students who are difficult to motivate through mainstream instructional offerings. Also expected to benefit average students is the decision to provide all remediation in separate classrooms, thus providing a lower pupil-teacher ratio in regular classrooms.